AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE

ROBERT BURNS WALLACE

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE

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In Memory
of
My Parents
and
My Wife

It has been a real pleasure to me to read your manuscript. The subject, as you know, has been of special interest to me for many years. For that reason, as well as for the excellence of your treatise, I have thoroughly enjoyed going over it.

It is a good piece of work. No one can read it intelligently without realizing that you have spent years on the subject. Then, too, the material is presented in a very practical way. While Moulton's book is a classic, and we can never repay our debt to him, it has always seemed to me that his book does not appeal to the average student. It is not simple enough. But your book does meet the student on the level of his understanding. Using that as a basis, I can see how a class can easily become enthusiastic over the study of the Bible as literature.

It almost makes me want to undertake again the conduct of such a course.

George H. Wailes,
Professor of Hebrew, Temple University and Princeton Theological Seminary.

August, 1929.

PREFACE

THIS volume is precisely what it claims to be: An Introduction to the Bible as Literature. In its preparation the writer has constantly kept in mind, not the needs of the cloister, but those of the classroom. This educational point of view is the outcome both of the study of classroom problems and of classroom experience covering a quarter of a century.

The book is based upon a course of lectures delivered to the students of Temple University, though the book by no means contains all said in the lectures. The fact, however, that it is based upon lectures gives it the lecture room flavor. This is intentional; for the educational *raison d'être* of the book is to assist the student in coördinating his thinking relative to the study of the Bible as literature.

The sources of the writer's information and inspiration are too numerous to be reckoned up either in order or in number. During undergraduate, graduate, and theological seminary days scores of books have been consulted for special purposes, which, though they have in no specific sense contributed to this volume, nevertheless have contributed in an indirect though helpful manner. Moreover, hundreds of books have been consulted or read for purposes of Biblical exegesis. What the specific contribution from this source has been it would be impossible to say. Then, too, the great field of world literature

has been a constant stimulus in the matter of literary appreciation.

Among special acknowledgments I must mention the present value of parts of the Bible learned by heart in childhood and youth. This was brought about by the coöperation of home and Sunday School. College days offered very little help in Bible literature. Theological seminary days gave much help in Bible exegesis, but none in the consideration of the Bible as literature. In seminary days, however, I learned of books which have proved of later service in the literary field.

Of the books that I have used in my study of the Bible as literature I shall mention a few here: others will be given in the Bibliography. My special thanks must be given to Bishop Lowth's pioneer book, "The Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews," and to Dr. Penniman, of the University of Pennsylvania, who in a graduate class more than a score of years ago brought me to know the bishop's book. I make special mention of Dr. Moulton's "The Literary Study of the Bible"; of Professor McFadyen's book, "The Problem of Pain"; of Canon Driver's "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament"; of Professor Prothero's "The Psalms in Human Life"; of Dr. Work's "The Fascination of the Book"; of Dr. Whyte's "Bible Characters"; of Dr. Penniman's "A Book About the English Bible"; of that gifted series, "The Expositor's Bible"; of the Book of books without which the others would not be.

Further, this volume exists not as a substitute for the reading of the Bible but as an instrument to show how very interesting the Bible is when viewed as

literature. This volume insists that it can help the student, provided he will simultaneously read the Bible; for no book can make the Bible interesting to anyone unless he will read the Bible; nor can this INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE create interest from any point other than that of literature. Of course, a textbook such as this is cannot be complete or exhaustive; it can be only suggestive, introductory. Its purpose, therefore, is to give to university students and to young people of like mind a handy volume which will introduce them to the strength, beauty, and fascination of that book which by reason of its intrinsic literary value is the world's greatest classic.

It is fondly hoped that those who read this Introduction may find in it not only encouragement and inspiration to read Bible literature but also sufficient helpful hints to assist them in the appreciation of this literature; that they may taste and see that it is good; and that, having tasted, they may find so much pleasure, profit, and nourishment that they will eat daily of the bountiful table spread for them by the heavenly Muses.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning."

—*James 1:17.*

Another purpose of this Introduction is to keep before the student the fact that he is studying the Bible as literature, and not as "The English Bible" or as English literature. It is not possible, though

some have tried to do it, to force the Hebraism of the literature of the Bible into the molds of English thought. There is a translation of the Bible into the English language, but that is the only thing English about it. Isaiah's sublime message when done into English is no more English literature than Longfellow's translation of Dante is American literature. This is not pedantry, but a point of view and a differentia. We have adhered too long to apperceptive and to retroactive methods in Bible study; and it is for this reason that I ardently advocate historical methods of approach.

To Dr. George H. Wailes, Professor of Hebrew and Greek at Temple University, and Professor of Hebrew in Princeton Theological Seminary, I owe much. Dr. Wailes read the manuscript and offered many scholarly suggestions. For helpful hints, for constructive criticism, and for real inspiration I am deeply indebted to Dr. Lorin Stuckey, Head of the Department of Sociology, Temple University.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 15

I. PREPARATORY INFORMATION 21

The use of terms—Lists of books of the Bible —Original languages

II. HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE BIBLE..... 27

Classification of historical books—Different types of history—Biography—Style of historical books—Literary qualities and forms that adorn historical books—Character studies—Poems

III. THE POETRY OF THE BIBLE..... 56

General description of poetry from the historical viewpoint—The technique of Hebrew poetry supported by several examples—The basic structure in parallelism—Refrain—Attitude of mind and heart of the poet—High seriousness of poetry—The soul of Hebrew poetry: it is divinely inbreathed; it believes in the existence of God and of the human soul—Poetry has attributes: imagination, emotion, et cetera—The three poetic books: The Psalms, The Song of Solomon, The Lamentations of Jeremiah—Psalms classified according to thought—Song of Solomon an allegory some think, natural love poetry others believe, or folklore; it is religious poetry—Lamentations: Jeremiah author; Jerusalem personified by *Mater Dolorosa;* poems not pessimistic for they are suffused with sunshine; the divisions not essays but poems that explain life by harmonizing all its factors

IV. Prophetic Literature 103

Prophetic names and personalities—Difference between the prophetic gift and the prophetic office—Types of prophetic men—Special study of Isaiah—One Isaiah—Literary qualities: optimism, spirituality—Literary forms: allegory; ode; dirge; poems—Prophetic symphony —Emblem prophecy—Vision—Figures of speech —Relation of prophets to historical books

V. The Literature of Wisdom..... 152

Nature of wisdom literature—Conduct stressed —(1) The Proverbs—A compilation—Divisions as found in book itself—Four parts give totality of appeal—Ethical—Idealism reduced to a practical creed—Three translations by the author of this book—Other poems—Poem on "A Worthy Woman"—(2) Ecclesiastes—The name Koheleth, or preacher—Book to be read in its entirety—A paragraph apart from its context—The *summum bonum* of life—The preacher's search for *summum bonum;* he searches wisdom, pleasure, business—Golden mean "under the sun" key to thought—*Summum bonum* will be realized "above the sun"—Perfect parallelism of thought—The book is a poem—(3) The Epistle of James—Faith as a quality accepted—Faith must result in works—Difference between belief and formal creed—James depends on Apocrypha and Old Testament literature of wisdom—Good style

VI. The Idyl 178

The Book of Ruth not a short story—Human love in its strength and simplicity—The narrative of Ruth, the Moabitess, is woven into delightful rural surroundings—Naomi, the matchmaker—Ruth, the charming young widow —The courtship—The marriage—Splendid rustic background—Wordsworth quoted—Irving quoted

VII. The Drama 186

The term discussed—Esther and Job dramatic—Dr. Moulton quoted—Dr. Whiton's logical dramatic divisions of The Book of Esther—The story of the play—Technique of regular drama applied to The Book of Esther—The ethics of the book—Nationalism of the book—The Book of Job: in what sense dramatic—The story told with explanations—The debaters, including Elihu—Does the plot lend itself to dramatic interest?—The four acts—Job changes from a moral man to a godly man—Here are epic, lyric, dialogue, character

VIII. Literary Forms in the New Testament 229

Twenty-seven books, twenty-one letters—Origin of letters—Nature of letters—Definite physical organization—Letters are polite literature—Parable—A comparison—Old Testament parables sometimes used as riddles—Didacticism—New Testament parable an earthly story with a heavenly meaning—It is gifted for expressing thought—One discussed for method—Apocryphal literature—The Revelation of John—The prologue—The purpose of the book—Based on numbers—Significant numbers, persons, things, and places—Millennium—City of God

IX. The Bible Translated 271

Original documents—History of their use—Authorities quoted—The various translations

X. Apocryphal Literature of the Old Testament 282

History of the books—Literary value

Appendix 293

Bibliography 296

INTRODUCTION

We have called the matter found in this textbook An Introduction to the Bible as Literature. This title suggests at once the limitations of the subject and the exact purpose of the pages.

In educational circles a desire to know both the body and the soul of the literature of the world's greatest classic has come into being; and this desire is being fostered and cherished by a few American universities. The students of such institutions of learning need guidance in the matter of the reading of the Bible from the point of view of literature. This volume offers its services as a guide.

It is not a treatise in the field of Biblical introduction; for that field has been diligently and scientifically cultivated by some of the world's greatest scholars; anyway the subject of introduction is entirely too technical, and not always in sympathy with literary endeavors. Even in Driver's "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament" the critical breezes are too strong for the highly sensitized soul of the lover of pure literature.

Furthermore, this book is not a commentary in any sense; for such a book is not needed. In this department of Bible study there is no jot or tittle or Masoretic vowel in the Hebrew Scriptures, no Greek preposition or Greek particle or Greek word in the New Testament Scriptures, that has not been

placed on the operating tables of exegetical clinics; and yet the Bible lives and moves and has its being, and withal is a thing of beauty and will be a joy forever to those whose literary consciousness is thoroughly awakened. This is especially true of The Psalms in which, Heine says, are collected "sunrise and sunset, birth and death, promise and fulfillment —the whole drama of humanity."

This volume has no thought of lightly esteeming that sacred reverence for the Bible which puts its shoes from off its feet and hears the voice of God say, "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The Bible is first of all God's book, but it is also man's book, for holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Spirit of God, and the personalities of those men were never held in abeyance, never suppressed, never submerged.

The literary style of Amos, the herdsman prophet, is as different from that of the patrician Isaiah as is the style of Burns, the plowman, from that of Milton, the sublime scholar. Indeed the styles in the Bible are as varied as are the authors; and there it is as true as anywhere else that "the style is the man." This fact needs to be accepted by the reader before he can appreciate the mind of the writer. Failure to do this has, in not a few instances, made Bible-reading a very uninteresting and a most mechanical exercise.

The Bible, which is the most used book in the world, is, doubtless, the most abused book in the world, for it has suffered at the hands of both friend and foe. A thoughtless acceptance of some traditional views concerning it has blinded the eyes and deafened

the ears of so many that seeing they see not and hearing they hear not; they read the book either in devotional snatches or from cover to cover as if it were all of a mechanical piece—not prose, not poetry, but just the Bible. Others whose hypercritical minds are never satisfied unless they can fit mechanical chronology into a cold and lifeless mosaic fail to see that Isaiah has just as much dramatic right to ignore or even to overlook the logic of chronology in order to serve the higher purposes of unifying matters of the spirit as had Shakespeare when that "Emperor by the Grace of God of All Literature" made dates secondary, subordinate, and subsidiary to the higher purpose of "the uncovering of those springs of action in which great national movements take their rise."

Both Isaiah and Shakespeare dealt with questions which, though they have relationships with space and time, are both universal and timeless, beyond the control of fixed dates. For a reader who keeps these principles in mind there is no difficulty in knowing why Isaiah's vision for service is mentioned in ch. 6 though ch. 1 records the fact of the prophet's exercising his office.

From the chronological point of view ch. 6 is in the wrong place but from the viewpoint of unity of thought it is in the right place; "for having pronounced woes upon others he pauses to assure his hearers that he first pronounced woe upon himself." Therefore, we must not read Isaiah for an accurate chronological succession of events, though such can be fairly established; we must read him for an in-

terpretation of events. He was not an historian but a prophet.

The student must be led to see—and this is the writer's purpose—that the Bible contains many literary forms, that it speaks a varied language. In it he will find history of several kinds; epics and epic cycles and epic incidents; lyrics and their various modifications; patriotic songs; idyls; liturgies; epithalamiums; wisdom literature; drama; biography; letters; prophetic literature; and apocalyptic literature.

Here he will see the rise and fall of kingdoms; the procession of many of the great and good of the ages; invaders as numerous as grasshoppers entering the Promised Land. He will listen to the groans of the wounded; the moans of the dying; the eloquent cadences of the orator; the authoritative and persuasive voice of the prophet; the whispers of lovers, which are as sweet as "the dewdrops that fall upon the roses of May." He will hear the liturgies of the Temple; the odes of worshipers; the processional hymnology of the pilgrims as they wend their way to the Holy City. His ears will catch the echoes of the songs of victors as those songs ascend to Him whose power casts the horse and his rider into the sea; his eyes will look upon drama as wonderful and as fascinating and at times as difficult as is the drama of life itself. In short, there will pass before the inner eye of the constructive reader of Bible literature the whole drama of those experiences that are universal and fundamental in human life.

The writer of this textbook must make mention of the fact that its mission is not to win a place in

the library of the Bible specialist but to find its way into the hands of college and university students. Their needs have been constantly kept in mind and have determined the form, fashion, and spirit of the book. But while this is the book's special purpose it is fondly hoped that the laity, now friendly to all phases of religious education, will read it. It is even anticipated that it will serve a useful purpose in the library of every Sunday School teacher who wishes to be well equipped for his laudable work. In sending the book forth on its mission of love the author hopes that those who will peruse it may find as much of pleasure and of profit as he experienced in preparing it.

A bibliography, both for the students' present use and for more intensive study in the future, is found on the last pages of the book. Though the study of the Bible as literature is comparatively new and has not produced a large and distinctive library, yet there is a large enough number of books to constitute a major study. In addition to distinctive books the reader meets many nuggets of pure gold in other books, just as the traveler finds in nature rare beauties in spots not marked on the regular tourist routes.

For the sake of uniformity the Biblical quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the American Standard Version of the Revised Bible, copyright, 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons, and used by permission.

CHAPTER I

PREPARATORY INFORMATION

It is a Socratic fundamental that one should always know the exact sense in which he uses his terms. We follow this advice in seeking to know the meaning of the term, Bible.

It is a significant piece of language history that as early as the fifth century A.D. the plural number *ta biblia* was used to specify the sacred canonical books of the Bible, both Testaments. As, however, the people of the Church came to see the purposeful unity of the sacred rolls they expressed their belief in the use of the singular number, *to biblion,* the number used in all modern languages; hence we have the term, "The Bible." This word should always be written with a capital.

It is customary to speak of the Bible as the Old and the New Testaments. Of the word "testament" some explanation is needed. The translators who made the Septuagint version of the Hebrew Scriptures rendered the word *b'rith,* which means "covenant," by the Greek *diatheke* which not only means "a covenant or an agreement" but also bears the translation "will, or disposition of one's property." Making use of the Septuagint, the Old Latin version translated *diatheke* by *testamentum,* thus selecting

the secondary meaning of the Greek word. That secondary significance has passed into our English usage. We, therefore, speak of two Testaments, which are the grand divisions of that same literary instrument which is almost universally regarded as the Bible.

There is no uniform division of the books of the Old Testament. The order preserved by the Jews is different from that of the Latin Vulgate and from that of the English versions. It is as follows: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The first part is the Torah, or Pentateuch, and contains the first five books or rolls; rabbinical literature fittingly speaks of them as the five fifths of the Law. The second part contains the Prophets, i.e., the former prophets, Joshua to Kings; the latter prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel; and the twelve minor writers. The third part contains the remaining books and has for its name Hagiographa, or Holy Writings.

The Latin Vulgate order, if we exclude the Apocryphal writings, is that which we find in our English Bibles. The arrangement follows:

Genesis	II Chronicles	Daniel
Exodus	Ezra	Hosea
Leviticus	Nehemiah	Joel
Numbers	Esther	Amos
Deuteronomy	Job	Obadiah
Joshua	Psalms	Jonah
Judges	Proverbs	Micah
Ruth	Ecclesiastes	Nahum
I Samuel	Song of Solomon	Habakkuk
II Samuel	Isaiah	Zephaniah
I Kings	Jeremiah	Haggai
II Kings	Lamentations	Zechariah
I Chronicles	Ezekiel	Malachi

The Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate are in substantial agreement; both include the Apocryphal books which are fourteen in number and are as follows:

I Esdras
II Esdras
Tobit
Judith
Esther (other chapters)
Wisdom of Solomon
Ecclesiasticus
Baruch
Song of the Three Holy Children
History of Susanna
Bel and the Dragon
Prayer of Manasses
I Maccabees
II Maccabees

The books of the New Testament are always arranged in the same order. The list follows:

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
The Acts
Romans
I Corinthians
II Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
I Thessalonians
II Thessalonians
I Timothy
II Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
I Peter
II Peter
I John
II John
III John
Jude
Revelation

That the student may fully appreciate the meaning of "the Bible as literature" he needs to learn that the languages in which it was composed have not a little to do in determining the value of its artistic appeal. Doubtless the English of the version of "The Most High and Mighty Prince James" is incomparable for its music and for its beauty, but the music and the beauty are characteristics and qualities of the Hebrew and of the Greek language of which the Authorized Version is the translation. This transfer of qualities from one language and literature to another

language and its literature has never been quite able to make the translation of as much literary value as is the original instrument.

Longfellow's translation of Dante, for example, misses some of the divine fire of the Italian poet. In like manner Chapman, Pope, Bryant, Lang, Leaf, and Butcher fail in transferring from Greek into English some of the force, fire, and simple beauty of antiquity's immortal bard. Yet all translations of the Bible have been guided, molded, and trammeled by that excellent spirit of the original languages, particularly of the Hebrew, which is ever aglow with the genial warmth of fervid hearts. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked" is a good translation, but we miss the deep emotionalism that bubbles up out of the almost exclamatory form of the sentence in Hebrew: "Oh! the blessednesses of the man who walks not in the counsel of ungodly men!"

Most of the Old Testament is written in the Hebrew language. The only exceptions are parts of Ezra, chs. 4:8 to 6:18; 7:12-26; Daniel, ch. 2, from the middle of v. 4 to the end of ch. 7; and Jeremiah 10:11. Those parts were written in Aramaic, which is a cognate Semitic language. It was, in the days of Jesus, the Hebrew vernacular.

The New Testament is written in Greek, frequently spoken of, though incorrectly, as New Testament Greek, as if it were essentially different from what is known as classical Greek. The fact is that, as Deissmann has pointed out, between eighty and ninety per cent of the New Testament's vocabulary has either Aristotelian or pre-Aristotelian sanction. It is, then,

necessary to speak of the original text as "the Greek of the New Testament." This is a distinction with a difference.

It is a matter of some importance that the student shall understand the real nature of this language of the New Testament: that it is not a dialect but that it is the *koine,* or vernacular, put into literary form for a sacred purpose. In the secular writers, Philo Judæus and Polybius, the same vocabulary and style are used for secular purposes. The language of the New Testament, used for sacred purposes, was that of living men; it makes its vitality felt to the reader and that vitality has passed into the translation.

Inter-Biblical history is recorded in the books known as the Old Testament Apocrypha. There are fourteen of these books of various lengths and values. Of this collection Dr. Gregg says, "It is a telling witness to the existence and worth of the Old Testament Scriptures which we all canonize."[1]

The original languages of these books were both Hebrew and Greek. It is certain that Ecclesiasticus was written in Hebrew; and it is equally certain that the author of II Esdras used the Greek language as his medium of expression.

The bilingual origin of these books shows most interestingly that though the Jews of the Dispersion remembered the language of Canaan they yet reacted enthusiastically to the civilization which produced the Greek language, for most of these books have been presented to us in that tongue and with that flavor which is redolent of Alexandrian culture. In Alexandria there lived at one time one million Jews.

[1] D. Gregg, "Between the Testaments," p. 103.

In a later chapter we shall treat of the literary qualities of the Apocryphal books. Meantime we turn to a study of the Old and New Testament canonical Scriptures, the sixty-six writings that make up the covenant between Jehovah and his people.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

I BEGIN this chapter by giving a summary of Dr. Richard Moulton's classification of the historical books of the Old Testament. Genesis he calls primitive history; Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, constitutional history; Joshua, Judges, and I Samuel, incidental history; II Samuel, I and II Kings, regular history; I and II Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, ecclesiastical history.[1]

To this list, and here I regret to differ with Dr. Moulton, I add the book Deuteronomy, which I consider not as "spoken rhetoric" but as legal history with a prophetic flavor. The book of Genesis, just because it is the story of beginnings, is of perennial interest. Here is the account of the beginnings of man and of the family, the elements of civilization and indeed of all man's relationships with the world. Joseph's experience as food administrator in Egypt is an epic incident in the field of economics. There is, however, no more informing or interesting part of a nation's record than that part which is known as constitutional history. All nations that have lasted long enough to express themselves concerning standards of life and conduct for the people have produced constitutional history. These

[1] R. Moulton, "The Literary Study of the Bible."

standards are variously expressed. Great Britain has no formal, written constitution, but that ancient civilization has legal decisions and parliamentary enactments preserved in the government archives, and the manner in which the English people are now reacting to these laws is making history. The United States of America has a formal, written Constitution, which came into being to meet specific needs and has been added to as other needs have arisen. When an American citizen reacts favorably to this document he is said to act constitutionally. Both British and American constitutions claim that they are of purely human origin; the Hebrew constitution, on the contrary, maintains that it is a theocratic instrument divinely given for the guidance of the people. Since, then, the people of Israel were led especially by Jehovah, laws for their governance came to them not by evolution but by revelation. It must, however, be kept in mind that new needs brought fresh manifestations, additional revelations, for the story of the Old Testament is one of progressive revelation. This fact is evident in these three books of constitutional history, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, and thus they share with other books of the Old Testament in setting forth God's method of self-revelation.

The book of Exodus tells the story of emancipation from Egyptian bondage. It also tells how, with this new liberty, there came new responsibilities and larger life opportunities and hence shows that there arose the need for laws to regulate conduct. That part of the Law called the moral law is summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments, a document

which intimates that liberty is personal privilege regulated by law, and always by law.

The book of Leviticus, also constitutional history, deals with the provision which was made for granting to the sinner absolution and remission of his sin; for bestowing pardon upon those who either failed to conform to the law of God or who had actually transgressed it. Herein is found the central fact of the Jewish religion, the atonement. The chief exponent of this religion, the high priest, offered yearly an atonement for the sins of the people who had not reacted favorably to the terms and provisions of the Constitution.

The book of Numbers classified the people during their post-Egyptian and pre-Canaanite experiences, and, as an anonymous author has remarked, divided them into workers, worshipers, and warriors. This division was made that all the people might act rightly toward the Constitution. The Constitution was the thing.

Thus far we have mentioned the moral and the ceremonial aspect of the Constitution. We now turn to the judicial part of the Law of Moses, which made provision for the administration of justice, for property rights, for the education of the young, and for such other matters as, in our own time, are cared for by congressional enactment and by expert judicial interpretations.

The book of Deuteronomy while not a treatise on constitutional history is, in a significant sense, a legal interpretation of matters constitutional. It is more than "spoken rhetoric." It is the supreme court for the interpretation of the Constitution.

The next three books of history, Joshua, Judges, and I Samuel, concern themselves with Israel's progress toward self-government and are classified as incidental history. With Dr. Moulton I believe that this is the most nearly correct name for them, since they are, for the most part, made up of epic incidents, whether the separate stories of the judges or cycles of stories relating to Joshua, to Samson, to Samuel and Saul.

The period from the accession of King David to the Exile is reported in II Samuel and the two books of Kings. These are properly called regular history, for they give a formal and a continuous account of the respective kings of both the United and the Divided Kingdom.

It remains necessary to name four other historical books, namely, I and II Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. These writings are devoted to matters chiefly ecclesiastical, for even in Chronicles the matter and content are vitally related to the Jewish Church.

In the New Testament there is one distinctively historical work, the book of The Acts. This deals with the record of the Christian Church in the Apostolic Age. The genuineness and authenticity of this early writing are alike indisputable and as history it is invaluable. Evidence both external and internal points to Luke, the beloved physician, as its author.

In the first part of the book there is an account of the Christian Church as it existed in the city of Jerusalem; this occupies chs. 1:1 to 8:4. In the second part, chs. 8:5 to 12:25, is the account of the scattering abroad of some of the disciples who went everywhere preaching the gospel, together with a rec-

ord of those strategic transitional events that caused the Church to establish contacts with the Asiatic and Roman and Greek worlds.

These contacts which lie beyond the transitional events are treated in the third and last part of the book and take up chs. 13 to 28.

Related to the field of history and found in the New Testament is some biographical literature. The original documents in this sort of writing are usually called the four Gospels. As a matter of fact there is but one gospel but there are four accounts of the life of Jesus, who made that gospel a possibility.

A brief synopsis of the historical books having been given, it is now our pleasure to show in what sense these books may be included in a study of literature. But what literary profit is there in a study of these books? Much every way, but chiefly because in them are found the graces and beauty of pure literature. This is true for both content and style.

There is, however, in Bible histories a quality that is not style but which helps to make style, since it controls the writer who, after all, is the style and produces within him a fine soul which is the necessary antecedent of a fine style. This quality is the differentia between secular and sacred history; it is the ever present consciousness on the part of the writers of Bible history that there is a Providence that directs, fashions, and shapes human affairs. The author of the book of Genesis is aware that the apparently chance meeting of a butler and a baker in an Egyptian jail is a definite link in the providential chain of events leading to the elevation of Joseph to the premiership of a great country where Pharaoh

sat upon the throne but where Joseph was the real ruler.

This God consciousness on the part of the writers shows itself in their thoughts, for they see the hand of God both in the smallest details and also in the major events of space and time. Thunder and lightning accompany God's message to Moses. A servant leads Saul to Samuel. Saul slays his thousands; David, the shepherd boy, in single combat slays that boasting Philistine, Goliath. In all matters the writers recognize God, and this vision produced a fine style because it produced in the writers souls of a good quality.

Our first concern is the style of the historical books. We hope by several samples, carefully chosen, to show that the style is simple, clear, and dignified. The first of these is the Ten Commandments; nor will any reader think this sample ill chosen, for it embodies the substance of the moral Law:

"And God spake all these words, saying, I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

"Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

"Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God

in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.

"Thou shalt not kill.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery.

"Thou shalt not steal.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's."

—*Exodus 20: 1-17.*

Anyone who will read the Commandments aloud will not question the simplicity, the clearness, and the dignity of that immortal document. Nor are the specifications of the ceremonial aspect of the Law any less simple, clear, and dignified. Let one example suffice:

"And it shall be a statute for ever unto you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and shall do no manner of work, the home-born, or the stranger that sojourneth among you: for on this day shall atonement be made for you,

to cleanse you; from all your sins shall ye be clean before Jehovah."

—Leviticus 16: 29, 30.

The same qualities of style are found in the judicial part of the Law of Moses. I use one illustration:

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

—Deuteronomy 6: 6, 7.

Indeed these qualities of style are found in all the historical books in Bible literature. Three more examples are here given, taken from widely different kinds of history. The first is from The Book of Nehemiah; the second, from Deuteronomy; and the third is taken from The Acts of the Apostles.

When Nehemiah was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem his enemies endeavored, partly by mockery and partly by flattery, to have him cease building. Tobiah, one of his enemies, said of the mending of the wall, "If a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall."

But these men of the sword and of the trowel kept on mending the wall and mending it well; for they "had a mind to work." Seeing that the wall was rebuilt, and that there was no breach left therein, his enemies invited Nehemiah to meet them on the plain of Ono in one of the villages; but their flattery was futile and he made them the following simple, clear, dignified, and memorable reply:

"I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"

—*Nehemiah 6:3.*

The next illustration of the style of the historical books of the Bible as found in the Old Testament is a part of Moses' valedictory address:

"And thou shalt remember all the way which Jehovah thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or not. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live.

"Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. And thou shalt consider in thy heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so Jehovah thy God chasteneth thee. And thou shalt keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

"For Jehovah thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper. And thou shalt eat and be full, and thou shalt bless Jehovah thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

"Beware lest thou forget Jehovah thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: lest,

when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget Jehovah thy God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground where was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not; that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end: and lest thou say in thy heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember Jehovah thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth; that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as at this day. And it shall be, if thou shalt forget Jehovah thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations that Jehovah maketh to perish before you, so shall ye perish; because ye would not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah your God."

—*Deuteronomy 8: 2-20.*

The last example of this simple, clear, and dignified style of the historical books is taken from The Acts. This example is interesting in view of the fact that Luke, the only Gentile who wrote any part of the Bible, exhibits the same qualities of style as those found in the Old Testament. We are not concerned with the great and wide question of how much Hebraism or how much Hellenism is found in the content of New Testament writings: we are con-

cerned only with the style. We quote, then, this example of Luke's historical writing:

"And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said,

"Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, To an Unknown God. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said,

For we are also his offspring.

Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man. The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

—*Acts 17: 22-31.*

As a further example of simple, clear, and dignified style I quote from one of the biographies in the New Testament, literature related to history:

"And he said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country; and there he wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. But when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and make merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."

—*Luke 15:11-24.*

This example shows how good is the New Testament biography. This sort of writing to be considered literature must have properly selected material and that material must be coherently arranged and logically

put together. Both of these requirements are met in the biographies of Christ.

I continue this chapter by making mention of the purely literary qualities that amplify and adorn the historical narratives. We have shown that the narratives, as to style, are simple, clear, and dignified, but now we wish ardently to advocate that the reader see that these historical works are supported and garnished by many infallible proofs of the romantic and poetic mind. The presence of this type of mind almost constrains one to think that the historians found more pleasure in the telling of the facts than they found in the facts themselves. When the reader meets these infallible proofs he is conscious that he is reading an unusual type of history. He becomes aware that interesting stories of both realism and romanticism hold his attention; that poems of a charming nature appeal to him; and that many persons of worth and prominence meet and greet him.

Take for instance the beautiful prose idyl, the story of Isaac and Rebekah. I quote here the closing paragraph of this idyl because it describes the meeting of these two strategic lovers, and later their marriage:

"And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. And Isaac came from the way of Beer-lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the land of the South. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, there were camels coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she alighted from the camel. And she said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh

in the field to meet us? And the servant said, It is my master: and she took her veil, and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."

—*Genesis 24: 61-67.*

Here is a lovely picture of the beginning of a family life. Pictures of peaceful family life do not always furnish thrills, but they do always inspire. We, too, have inspired writers who have painted similar pictures. There is, for example, that charming Scottish idyl, "The Cotter's Saturday Night," by Robert Burns; and there is also that delightful New England picture, Whittier's "Snow-bound." John Howard Payne, an American dramatist, gathered this homy feeling into his "Home, Sweet Home," a poem that speaks to humanity both from the heart and from the hearth.

Another story of human life is told in the report of Jacob's courtship, a courtship that did not run smoothly, though it is evident that his love was a true love. It is interesting to read about the vision which Jacob saw at the close of the first day on which he went in search of a wife. The earth-bound, heaven-touching ladder which was in the vision gave magnitude to his mission and called him to be a man of destiny.

The story of Joseph, not only because of the space given to it in Genesis but because of its strategic historical importance, and because of its intrinsic literary worth, must have some space on these pages.

The chief facts of Joseph's history are here set forth in order:

It was as a youth of seventeen that he first appeared. He was visiting his brothers where they were feeding their sheep, and noting some of their evil conduct he reported it to his father. This made his brothers hate him, but his father loved him well and made him a coat of many colors. About this same time Joseph had a dream which prophesied power for him. When his brothers heard the dream they hated him still more. These three things—the evil report, the coat, and the dream—led his brothers to plot violence against him, even murder. The murder was thwarted and he was sold to a company of business men who were on their way to Egypt. When they came to Egypt Joseph was sold to Potiphar, captain of the king's guard—yes, and sold at a profit, because Joseph was comely and good-looking. His good looks brought on a crisis in the Potiphar household, for Potiphar's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph and asked him to sell his birthright for illicit physical pleasure, but he left his garment and kept his character and thus escaped the kind of woman of whom Solomon says, "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell." (A.V.)

Because this evil woman was frustrated in her nefarious purpose she trumped up a charge against Joseph upon the basis of which he was thrown into prison. Here he so deported himself that he became a trusted man. It happened that while he was a "trusty" two prisoners, newcomers, were put under his guard. These two men, a baker and a butler, were from the household of Pharaoh. And they dreamed

dreams, both of them in one night, and on the morrow they were sad. Joseph said unto them: "Why are you so sad?" They said unto him: "We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it." And Joseph said unto them, "Do not interpretations belong unto God? Tell me them, I pray you." And Joseph when he had heard told them the meaning of their dreams; for he was ever a dreamer. (All great men have been dreamers.) And when he had told the butler that he would be restored to Pharaoh's household he said:

"But have me in thy remembrance when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house."

—*Genesis 40:14.*

But the butler was much like other human beings—he forgot:

"Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him."

—*Genesis 40: 23.*

One night Pharaoh had a disturbing dream, and he, too, was sad and told his dream and sent for his wise men to tell him the meaning thereof, but they could not. It was then that the butler remembered Joseph who, upon the butler's recommendation, was brought out of prison to interpret the dream of Egypt's ruler. This truly is a dream epic. Joseph's interpretation of the dream gave him the necessary information for the solution of the country's future economic problems, and Joseph became the world's first great food administrator.

During seven years of great plenty he paid premiums against seven years of dearth. During the dearth which reached Canaan, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to buy bread. This part of the story is too sacred and too beautiful to talk about: it must be read quietly and reverently. Suffice it to say that in literature there is nothing more beautiful than the revelation of himself to his brothers; the meeting between his aged father and himself; and later the meeting between Pharaoh and the aged patriarch, Jacob.

It is altogether human; for Pharaoh instead of talking about racial conditions and economics and hazardous journeys asked that beautiful question: "Jacob, how old are you?"

Other stories, such as those of Saul and his exploits; of David the warrior, poet, and king; and of Solomon "in all his glory," hold the reader's attention; they will never "pass into nothingness" because they contain qualities which are both universal and fundamental.

As adornments of those historical narratives there are poems of poise and power, and they lift prose to almost the heights of poetry itself. The first one that I use is called the "Song of Moses and Miriam":

"Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto Jehovah, and spake, saying,
"I will sing unto Jehovah, for he hath triumphed gloriously:
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.
Jehovah is my strength and song,
And he is become my salvation:
This is my God, and I will praise him;

My father's God, and I will exalt him.
Jehovah is a man of war:
Jehovah is his name.
Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea;
And his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.
The deeps cover them:
They went down into the depths like a stone.
Thy right hand, O Jehovah, is glorious in power,
Thy right hand, O Jehovah, dasheth in pieces the enemy.
And in the greatness of thine excellency thou overthrowest them that rise up against thee:
Thou sendest forth thy wrath, it consumeth them as stubble.
And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were piled up,
The floods stood upright as a heap;
The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea.
The enemy said,
I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil;
My desire shall be satisfied upon them;
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.
Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them:
They sank as lead in the mighty waters.
Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah, among the gods?
Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?
Thou stretchedst out thy right hand,
The earth swallowed them.
Thou in thy lovingkindness hast led the people that thou hast redeemed:
Thou hast guided them in thy strength to thy holy habitation.
The peoples have heard, they tremble:
Pangs have taken hold on the inhabitants of Philistia.

Then were the chiefs of Edom dismayed;
The mighty men of Moab, trembling taketh hold upon them:
All the inhabitants of Canaan are melted away.
Terror and dread falleth upon them;
By the greatness of thine arm they are as still as a stone;
Till thy people pass over, O Jehovah,
Till the people pass over that thou hast purchased.
Thou wilt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance,
The place, O Jehovah, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in,
The sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.
Jehovah shall reign for ever and ever.
For the horses of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and Jehovah brought back the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel walked on dry land in the midst of the sea."

—*Exodus 15:1-19.*

The next poem to be considered is no less beautiful than the "Song of Moses and Miriam": it is called "The Song of Deborah." This, like the other poem, is arranged to be sung antiphonally. Because this is an early song and because it is artistically complete a part of it is here given:

"Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying,
"For that the leaders took the lead in Israel,
For that the people offered themselves willingly,
Bless ye Jehovah.
Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes;
I, even I, will sing unto Jehovah;
I will sing praise to Jehovah, the God of Israel.
Jehovah, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,

When thou marchedst out of the field of Edom,
The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
Yea, the clouds dropped water.
The mountains quaked at the presence of Jehovah,
Even yon Sinai at the presence of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

"In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath,
In the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied,
And the travellers walked through byways.
The rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased,
Until that I Deborah arose,
That I arose a mother in Israel.
They chose new gods;
Then was war in the gates:
Was there a shield or spear seen
Among forty thousand in Israel?
My heart is toward the governors of Israel,
That offered themselves willingly among the people:
Bless ye Jehovah.
Tell of it, ye that ride on white asses,
Ye that sit on rich carpets,
And ye that walk by the way.
Far from the noise of archers, in the places of drawing water,
There shall they rehearse the righteous acts of Jehovah,
Even the righteous acts of his rule in Israel.
Then the people of Jehovah went down to the gates.
Awake, awake, Deborah;
Awake, awake, utter a song:
Arise, Barak, and lead away thy captives, thou son of Abinoam."

—*Judges 5:1-12.*

Through the poem there is that psychic power that makes for poetic appeal.

Beautified also by romance in all its phases are these historical books. Even the land of which the

Lord said to Israel, "I will give it you," is a land of poetic and romantic loveliness. Here grow flowers of rich hue, and in abundance. Here are the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley. How beautiful must have been the lily! "Consider the lilies of the field." When the time drew near for the people to go in to possess this land of flowers, Moses with more than historic force spoke to them; he spoke to them with the enthusiasm of the romancer:

"For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; but the land, whither ye go over to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven, a land which Jehovah thy God careth for: the eyes of Jehovah thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."

—Deuteronomy 11:10-12.

This is an expression of the romance of the land, "a land flowing with milk and honey." Of what other land has it ever been said by an historian that "the eyes of the Lord are always upon it"?

Here, too, in these historical books we find the romance of business. One illustration will do: it is the story of the poor boy who rose to great heights; who became the real ruler of his resident country. Dr. Moulton calls the story an epic incident. In this I cannot follow him, for what Joseph did was more than incidental; it was pioneer work in big business, very big business; it was the *romance of economics.*

Romance is seen in the realm of human affection, and seen in its purest forms. A notable example is

that of a deep friendship between two young men, Jonathan and David. "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." In the old-time English and American colleges and universities where young men lived together for four years, enduring and lifelong friendships were formed. Under such conditions the love story of these two young Hebrew youths has been repeated times without number.

On the pages of these historical books are portraits of some of the world's greatest and best. It is here that the novelist may find much material for character study and for the study of motives, which, of course, can be only spiritually discerned. These pilgrim fathers and mothers of the Orient, at an age when the world was young, demand our serious attention.

There is Abraham, the father of the faithful. How foursquare his name sounds! He is so much of a man and so important to history that some consider him one of the greatest in all history either sacred or secular. Common sense was one of his greatest possessions. In practical affairs he acted wisely, while in spiritual matters he had great faith in Jehovah and profound reverence towards Jehovah. These qualities made him the greatest and most patient pioneer in spiritual colonization. It is not surprising to read of him as we do in the words of James 2:23: "He was called the friend of God." To this man of faith came God's promise:

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and

him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

—*Genesis 12: 2, 3.*

This promise seemed to give him a firm grasp upon the greatness of God and a genial, self-sacrificing spirit towards humanity. Abraham being dead yet speaks; for we, too, Jew and Gentile alike, are blessed with faithful Abraham, who believed in the Lord and it was "reckoned unto him for righteousness." Truly this noble man walked upon the earth, talked with the stars, and held communion with God, the Great Spirit.

The character of Isaac, the son of Abraham, is a study in passive goodness. He sought peace and pursued it. When the servants of Abimelech, King of the Philistines, stopped the wells which his father's servants had digged he gave up the wells rather than continue the quarrel. During most of his life he was of gentle disposition. Allegorically speaking Isaac was the benign "Great Stone Face" of the quiet community of Beer-sheba and Hebron. He remained at home enjoying peace with both God and man.

With Jacob, the son of Isaac, it was very different; he was not for peace at any price. On the contrary he was aggressive, shrewd, cunning, and even impetuous. Some of these qualities he used to the disadvantage of others, as when he attempted to deceive his father.

This sin and fault of youth had not a little to do with the shaping of his whole life; for he was deceived both by his father-in-law and by his own sons. Jacob, too, was the prototype of all those who drive hard bargains. He made a close bargain with Laban, his father-in-law. He made a bargain even with God:

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God, then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

—*Genesis 28: 20-22.*

Another interesting and instructive character is Gideon, whose biography is written in incidental history in The Book of Judges. Here is a study in courage; for Gideon was a mighty man of valor. Here was a God-guided hero and not an abject coward. This man, who was taken from the threshing floor to do a noble deed, was more interested in the doing of it than in the length of time it required to accomplish it. The story of Gideon and his immortal three hundred stirs the blood and makes the heart respond as if to the sound of a trumpet. Look at the smallness of the army and then look at their courageous leader who led them to a great victory! All the world loves a hero. Gideon has the love of the world. He had the love and confidence of his men. All he needed to do was to give them a grasp of his conquering hand, and they set out with their torches in their hands and with a shout of confidence upon their lips. Courage born of faith in God did it.

As we study this man Gideon we are impressed with the fact that he had some of the failings of humanity. The story of that remarkable sign from God, the wonderful fleece, shows how strong a stimulus was needed to lift Gideon out of his inferiority complex into a heroic rôle in a larger life:

"Behold, my family is the poorest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And Jehovah said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man."

—*Judges 6: 15, 16.*

Gideon was not yet convinced that he should undertake the mission of subduing the Midianites and he said to God, "Show me a sign." Thus Gideon timidly counted the cost. But God graciously gave him the sign and Gideon was convinced. He arose from obscurity into the full light of publicity. His fear having gone, he proved his army, and led it to a glorious victory. "The sword of Jehovah, and of Gideon" was his battle cry. It was by this sign he conquered.

In this story we have an example of the historically established fact that great men have often come from unexpected places and from obscure family life. Gideon left the peaceful pastoral threshing floor that he might bring peace to the nation, a peace lasting many years.

"And the land had rest forty years in the days of Gideon."

—*Judges 8: 28.*

Inadequate would be the study of characters whom we meet in the historical books of the Bible were we to omit the ministry of women. It is, in a matter like this, difficult to choose, but choose we must, and our first chronological choice is Deborah, who in a very definite sense made history.

The study of the character of Deborah owes not a little of its fascination to her versatility. She arose "a mother in Israel," and in a wise, motherly manner

judged the people. There is no doubt that she ruled her own house with the same sort of wisdom that she displayed in the disposition of public affairs. Besides, her finer feelings were portrayed in some of her poetry; and most of it is good poetry.

Deborah was a woman with a home and a career. For the most part she honorably maintained the cares of life, but we think that public life made her just a little less feminine and a little more masculine than she, as a woman, should have been; for though "The Song of Deborah" is structurally artistic it yet has something in the content hardly in agreement with the finer feelings usually associated with real womanhood. No doubt her poem is a chant of patriotism, but it is moved by a too strong jubilation over the death of Sisera, as witness the manner in which she praises the woman who killed Sisera:

"Blessed above women shall Jael be,
The wife of Heber the Kenite;
Blessed shall she be above women in the tent.
He asked water, and she gave him milk;
She brought him butter in a lordly dish.
She put her hand to the tent-pin,
And her right hand to the workmen's hammer;
And with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote
through his head;
Yea, she pierced and struck through his temples.
At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay;
At her feet he bowed, he fell:
Where he bowed, there he fell down dead."
—*Judges 5: 24-27.*

This is a little less than the chivalry of the Middle Ages, which forbade a conqueror to rejoice over a

fallen foe; and it is a little less than womanly since it praises the death of a man who was assassinated under a flag of truce.

Another unusual woman is Jezebel, the Lady Macbeth of antiquity, who like the Scottish lady was cruelly ambitious. Lady Jezebel would allow no interference with her plans—not even if, to carry them out, she had to plan a murder. The story of Naboth and his garden, his small but patronymic and, therefore, sacred estate, is well known to all Bible readers. When the wicked Ahab failed in the purchase of the vineyard that resourcefully wicked woman, the wife of Ahab, set in operation a plot to secure it by force. Her passions were so deep and so dark, and her aspirations so unholy, that she would not permit sacred possessions to remain inviolate if they were in the way of her plans.

It was she that surpassed Ahab in crime; it was she that screwed up her carnality to the staying place; it was she that served as an example for the idea of a French writer who claims that while men differ between heaven and earth women differ between heaven and hell. Or, as Kipling's verse expresses it, "The female of the species is more deadly than the male."

This woman, who was strong in her badness, turned Ahab away from the worship of Jehovah to worship Baal, a false god. The record of this is plain:

"And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made the Asherah; and Ahab did yet more to provoke Jehovah, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him."

—I Kings 16: 32, 33.

"(But there was none like unto Ahab, who did sell himself to do that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites did, whom Jehovah cast out before the children of Israel)."

—I Kings 21: 25, 26.

Had she been a gracious woman she would have obtained honor, but since she was a bad woman she lies in the vile dust whence she came, "unwept, unhonored, and unsung."

From this wicked woman we turn with pleasure to study the character of a very young girl. Introducing this damsel, this "blessed damozel," let me quote from The Second Book of the Kings:

"Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him Jehovah had given victory unto Syria: he was also a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper. And the Syrians had gone out in bands, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maiden; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would that my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! then would he recover him of his leprosy. And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maiden that is of the land of Israel."

—II Kings 5:1-4.

This introduces you to a little captive girl, a stranger in a strange land, a stranger to the people of Syria but not a stranger to the God of Israel. She knew God so well that she believed that his servant the prophet could heal her afflicted master. Thus and thus sang this little Pippa of antiquity as she passed along the Syrian road. The little optimist believed

that since Jehovah lived in heaven all must be right with the world, and all would be well with Naaman the leper.

This little maiden not only knew Jehovah, not only believed in him, but also translated her creed into conduct; she had everyday religion. Her idealism was for her an intensely practical creed.

In the use she made of her religion she needed courage; for the religion of Israel was not popular in Syria. Who knows but that she came to the kingdom of Syria for such a time as this?

In bringing this chapter to a close the reader is reminded that the chief purpose of it is to show that the historical books of Bible literature are so animated by an excellent spirit and so expressed in terms and forms of beauty, both in prose and poetry, that they must in a peculiar sense be considered literature. To see this beauty the books should be read as we read any other histories, not in part but in completeness. It is a pleasure to quote a pertinent passage: "I am persuaded that Biblical history in all its parts will have for the ordinary reader a new interest when the printer has been allowed to do for the text of Scripture what he is expected to do for every other historical work." [2]

[2] R. Moulton, "The Literary Study of the Bible," p. 259.

CHAPTER III

THE POETRY OF THE BIBLE

"More and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us."—*Matthew Arnold.*

This instrument which interprets life for us, and which we name poetry, has two parts: a true body and a beautiful soul. What is the soul of poetry? What is its body? In answer to the first question we learn from the constructive readers and critics of the ages that poetry is an imitation of life and nature; that it is the universal communion which the heart holds with nature and itself; that it is the language of the imagination; that it is the emanation of the moral and intellectual part of our nature; that it is indeed something divine; that it is the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds; that it is the instrument which lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world; that it is the image of life expressed in its eternal truth. For my present purpose I have the honor to quote that distinguished professor of poetry at Oxford University, England, who has said, "Poetry is that kind of thing the poets have written." This statement, which appears simple, and comes near to being a definition, is in thorough agreement with the animus of the ideas above quoted;

for that thing which the poets have written, that thing which has outlived the generation that produced it, that thing which from generation to generation has given to mankind both profit and pleasure, shows that the makers of it had reliable information concerning both life and nature; shows that the authors of it were stirred with deep feeling, that they were the fortunate owners of that creative function of the soul which we name imagination; shows that they were constantly endeavoring to answer the lyrical cry of the human soul for a world of beauty.

It shows that in season and out of season they were fostering the universal desire of the human spirit for a better world, a world of spiritual values; that they had ears of a good quality, ears that could hear, that could listen in to the rhythm of life and nature. That thing, then, called poetry knows, feels, sees, imagines, hears, and is spiritual: it has knowledge, emotion, vision, imagination, music, and spirituality. If it has these qualities, and the rolling centuries testify that it has, we are prepared for our second question: What is the form or body in which these poetic qualities live, move, and have their being?

Our answer is that the poetic body assumes different shapes or forms of expression. Latin and Greek prosody, as every schoolboy knows, uses as its basal unit the foot measure founded upon length of vowels. In English also there is the foot measure as the technical unit, but length of vowel does not determine measure. With but a few exceptions it is stress that rules in English versification. The technique of Hebrew is essentially different. One hundred and

seventy-five years ago Bishop Lowth, of Oxford University, England, explained what appears to be the true structure of Hebrew poetry. Upon his book, now out of print, Dr. Moulton bases the views maintained in his own book, "The Literary Study of the Bible," from which are quoted two passages that will introduce the student to a study of the technique of Hebrew poetry:

"Its underlying principle is found to be the symmetry of clauses in a verse, which has come to be called 'parallelism.'

* * * * * *

"Like the swing of a pendulum to and fro, like the tramp of an army marching in step, the versification of the Bible moves with a rhythm of parallel lines."[1]

The technique of this parallelism may best be learned from examples well understood. A few of these examples we now offer to the reader:

"The labor of the righteous tendeth to life;
The increase of the wicked, to sin."
—*Proverbs 10:16.*

In this statement we see the parallelism of words, contrasted words: labor, increase; righteous, wicked; life, sin. Here also is the parallelism of phrases: labor of the righteous, increase of the wicked. Then, too, there is the higher parallelism of thought: the thought about the wicked on the one hand; and, on the other, the thought concerning the righteous. This form of parallelism, in which there are sharp contrasts, is called antithetic.

[1] R. Moulton, "The Literary Study of the Bible," pp. 46, 47.

"That the wise man may hear, and increase in learning;
And that the man of understanding may attain unto sound counsels."

—*Proverbs 1:5.*

Here is synonymous parallelism, a form in which the thought of the first part is repeated in the second part, and repeated in equivalent terms.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler;
And whosoever erreth thereby is not wise."

—*Proverbs 20:1.*

This is that form of parallel structure in which the second part completes the first, which is known as synthetic. This form permits of amplification. In the First Psalm there is a good example of this extension of form:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor standeth in the way of sinners,
Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers."

—*Psalm 1:1.*

Here the thought of the blessedness of the man of righteousness is amplified and strengthened into a climax by means of a synthetic triplet. Further synthetic parallelism may be found in the form of a quatrain, as in Proverbs:

"The eye that mocketh at his father,
And despiseth to obey his mother,
The ravens of the valley shall pick it out,
And the young eagles shall eat it."

—*Proverbs 30:17.*

Indeed, synthetic parallelism may extend to greater lengths and to more subtle expressions of thought.

There is another type known by two names, or by one name spelled differently: inverted or introverted. The late Dr. Arthur T. Pierson, of Philadelphia, takes from the New Testament an excellent example of this form:

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine, lest haply they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you."

—*Matthew 7:6.*

In this stanza verses one and four are in agreement, while two and three parallel each other. Read thus, it is easily seen that this literary form is of great service in grasping the meaning of the message; for not only does it give sense but, in this case, reveals a knowledge of the habits of some animals. Let us read it thus:

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,
  Lest they turn and rend you;
Neither cast your pearls before swine,
  Lest haply they trample them under their feet.

This introversion lends itself to still wider use. The Second Psalm reveals this wider use, and for purposes of examination it is given in full. The translation is that of The Jewish Publication Society of America:

"Why are the nations in an uproar?
  And why do the peoples mutter in vain?
The kings of the earth stand up,
  And the rulers take counsel together,

Against the Lord, and against His anointed:
'Let us break their bands asunder,
And cast away their cords from us.'

"He that sitteth in heaven laugheth,
The Lord hath them in derision.
Then will He speak unto them in His wrath,
And affright them in His sore displeasure:
'Truly it is I that have established My king
Upon Zion, My holy mountain.'

"I will tell of the decree:
The Lord said unto me: 'Thou art My son,
This day have I begotten thee.
Ask of Me, and I will give the nations for thine inheritance,
And the ends of the earth for thy possession.
Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;
Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'

"Now therefore, O ye kings, be wise;
Be admonished, ye judges of the earth.
Serve the Lord with fear,
And rejoice with trembling.
Do homage in purity, lest He be angry, and ye perish in the way,
When suddenly His wrath is kindled.

"Happy are all they that take refuge in Him."
—*Psalm 2.*

In this psalm stanzas one and four are in parallel structure since both represent scenes on earth, the first being a picture of the nations in an uproar and the fourth, a picture of the nations admonished to take refuge in Jehovah. Stanzas two and three are in parallel structure for they are symbolic of two scenes

in heaven, the second stanza being a picture of the calm, quiet dignity of God and the third, a picture of the Messiah as he declares the divine decree in relation to himself. Further, the two earthly scenes are in parallelism with the two heavenly. The psalm thus read at once furnishes sense and reveals beauty, and so gives, as every piece of good literature should, pleasure and profit.

Another element in the technique of Hebrew poetry is the refrain which lends itself to the better expression of deep feeling. No doubt the use of this device grew out of the alliance of poetry and music; for it is in rhythm that we find the genesis of both these fine arts. As their beginning is one their appeal is one. An excellent example of this refrain in poetry is found in Psalm 107, for in that reflective lyric, after the account of each deliverance from certain troubles, there is a short refrain chorus. Generous quotations will show the artistic effectiveness of this literary device.

When those who had lost their way were led back safely to an inhabited city the chorus refrain celebrated that safe return:

"Oh that men would praise Jehovah for his loving-kindness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

When those who had been in captivity were set free, when their bands were broken in sunder, the refrain celebrated that emancipation:

"Oh that men would praise Jehovah for his loving-kindness,

And for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

When health and healing came to those who had been sick, when restoration like the dawn of youth became a fact, the refrain was again used:

"Oh that men would praise Jehovah for his loving-kindness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

When those who had been exposed to the dangers of the deep, to the perils of ocean's storms, at length rested in a fair haven the refrain intensified the exultation:

"Oh that men would praise Jehovah for his loving-kindness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

Verses 1-31 are now quoted to show unity of thought:

"Oh give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good;
For his lovingkindness endureth for ever.
Let the redeemed of Jehovah say so,
Whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the adversary,
And gathered out of the lands,
From the east and from the west,
From the north and from the south.

"They wandered in the wilderness in a desert way;
They found no city of habitation.
Hungry and thirsty,
Their soul fainted in them.
Then they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble,
And he delivered them out of their distresses,

He led them also by a straight way,
That they might go to a city of habitation.
Oh that men would praise Jehovah for his loving-kindness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of men!
For he satisfieth the longing soul,
And the hungry soul he filleth with good.
Such as sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,
Being bound in affliction and iron,
Because they rebelled against the words of God,
And contemned the counsel of the Most High:
Therefore he brought down their heart with labor;
They fell down, and there was none to help.
Then they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble,
And he saved them out of their distresses.
He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death,
And brake their bonds in sunder.
Oh that men would praise Jehovah for his loving-kindness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of men!
For he hath broken the gates of brass,
And cut the bars of iron in sunder.

"Fools because of their transgression,
And because of their iniquities, are afflicted.
Their soul abhorreth all manner of food;
And they draw near unto the gates of death.
Then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble,
And he saveth them out of their distresses.
He sendeth his word, and healeth them,
And delivereth them from their destructions.
Oh that men would praise Jehovah for his loving-kindness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of men!

And let them offer the sacrifices of thanksgiving,
And declare his works with singing.

"They that go down to the sea in ships,
That do business in great waters;
These see the works of Jehovah,
And his wonders in the deep.
For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind,
Which lifteth up the waves thereof.
They mount up to the heavens, they go down again
to the depths:
Their soul melteth away because of trouble.
They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken
man,
And are at their wits' end.
Then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble,
And he bringeth them out of their distresses.
He maketh the storm a calm,
So that the waves thereof are still.
Then are they glad because they are quiet;
So he bringeth them unto their desired haven.
Oh that men would praise Jehovah for his loving-
kindness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of
men!"

—*Psalm 107: 1-31.*

This literary form keeps before the mind of the reader the strophic structure of the psalm; and doubtless in the days of King David it served to assist the memory in reciting the actual words in a time when there were no books. Sometimes the refrain is used for explanatory purposes as in Psalm 136.

Another characteristic of Bible poetry is its diction, which is plain, homy, and yet unique. Nor could it be otherwise, for the translation endeavors to keep as close as possible to the original languages. The trans-

lation of Psalm 23 gives a fair idea of this simple diction.

"The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: he leadeth me
the quiet waters by.
My soul he doth restore again;
and me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
ev'n for his own name's sake.

"Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
yet will I fear none ill:
For thou art with me; and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.
My table thou hast furnished
in presence of my foes;
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
and my cup overflows.

"Goodness and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me:
And in God's house for evermore
my dwelling-place shall be."[2]

Vitally involved in poetry and in the making of poetry is the attitude of mind and heart which the artist brings to his work. The attitude of the Bible poets is that of high seriousness, and for that very reason their poems are great and good, aglow with enthusiasm and fervor.

This high seriousness manifests itself in the manner in which these poets treat of nature. To them the external world is a thing of beauty, of sublimity, and of majesty. It is informing to learn how they feel in

[2] Scottish Version.

the presence of earth, ocean, or sky. They see everything that God has made and they think it very good. One of them looks upon the fields white to the harvest and he breaks forth into singing:

> "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness;
> And thy paths drop fatness.
> They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness;
> And the hills are girded with joy.
> The pastures are clothed with flocks;
> The valleys also are covered with grain;
> They shout for joy, they also sing."
> —*Psalm 65:11-13.*

Undoubtedly this beautiful pastoral poem was written because of thankfulness that the harvest was ripe and ready for the reapers.

The poet continues to listen in to the rich harmonies of nature, that nature which is forever speaking; and behold he hears the trees of the woods clapping their hands. This joy which he attributes to the trees is the gladness of his own heart. He knows that only God can make trees; and that the God that makes trees can make them clap their hands in applause and in unison with the song that the corn reaper sings. How beautiful is the thought that the trees joy before God as men joy in the time of harvest!

Even in the presence of the flower of the field the Bible poet is reverent and serious. He looks upon the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley; and he talks of them sympathetically and affectionately. Sometimes he turns his thoughts to flowers as the messengers of spring and literally makes them say, "Spring is here":

"My beloved spake, and said unto me,
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.
For, lo, the winter is past;
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land;
The fig-tree ripeneth her green figs,
And the vines are in blossom;
They give forth their fragrance.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."
—*Song of Solomon 2:10-13.*

The Hebrew poets are equally reverent and serious as they contemplate the great, wide, troubled sea. It stirs their souls with deep feeling and fills their minds with thoughts profound. Their souls catch something of the majesty and mystery of the deep. Truly deep calls unto deep; and the poet is inspired to say:

"They that go down to the sea in ships,
That do business in great waters;
These see the works of Jehovah,
And his wonders in the deep.
For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind,
Which lifteth up the waves thereof.
They mount up to the heavens, they go down again to the depths:
Their soul melteth away because of trouble."
—*Psalm 107: 23-26.*

The appeal of the sea to the poetic mind and heart of the Hebrew poet is seen in the symbolic use made of it. In an ecstatic moment, Isaiah, a poet as well as a prophet, speaks of Messianic benedictions and says:

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea."

—*Isaiah 11: 9.*

This Old Testament poetic conception is carried over into New Testament writing; for in the literature of the Apocalypse the author says:

"And before the throne, as it were a sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind."

—*Revelation 4: 6.*

This high seriousness on the part of the Hebrew poets is seen in the fact that they stood in awe of the magnitude and sublimity of the firmament. The words of David, the poet king and kingly poet, are typical of this feeling. Standing reverently beneath the overarching sky and lifting up his eyes to those heights he says:

"The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament showeth his handiwork.
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night showeth knowledge."

—*Psalm 19:1, 2.*

Because of the beautiful manner in which the Scottish metrical version translates this psalm, it is quoted here in full:

"The heav'ns God's glory do declare,
the skies his hand-works preach:
Day utters speech to day, and night
to night doth knowledge teach.
There is no speech nor tongue to which
their voice doth not extend:

Their line is gone through all the earth,
their words to the world's end.

"In them he set the sun a tent;
Who, bridegroom-like, forth goes
From 's chamber, as a strong man doth
to run his race rejoice.
From heav'n's end is his going forth,
circling to th' end again;
And there is nothing from his heat
that hidden doth remain.

"God's law is perfect, and converts
the soul in sin that lies:
God's testimony is most sure,
and makes the simple wise.
The statutes of the Lord are right,
and do rejoice the heart:
The Lord's command is pure, and doth
light to the eyes impart.

"Unspotted is the fear of God,
and doth endure for ever:
The judgments of the Lord are true
and righteous altogether.
They more than gold, yea, much fine gold,
to be desired are:
Than honey, honey from the comb
that droppeth, sweeter far.

"Moreover, they thy servant warn
how he his life should frame:
A great reward provided is
for them that keep the same.
Who can his errors understand?
O cleanse thou me within
From secret faults. Thy servant keep
from all presumptuous sin:

"And do not suffer them to have
dominion over me:
Then, righteous and innocent,
I from much sin shall be.
The words which from my mouth proceed,
the thoughts sent from my heart,
Accept, O Lord, for thou my strength
and my Redeemer art."

King David is not alone in his reverence for the heavens; for when Job speaks of the Creator's power he talks in an astronomical language. To illustrate the greatness of God he borrows ideas from the stellar sky:

"Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades,
Or loose the bands of Orion?
Canst thou lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season?
Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train?"
—*Job 38: 31, 32.*

In this poetic study of nature the sun and the moon assist the poet as he speaks of the day that utters speech and of the night that shows knowledge. In Solomon's song the author speaks with strong passion of the beloved, and that passion he enhances by calling upon the greater light that rules the day and the lesser light that rules the night:

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning,
Fair as the moon,
Clear as the sun,
Terrible as an army with banners?"
—*Song of Solomon 6: 10.*

The psalmist, too, speaks of Jehovah as one

"Who maketh the clouds his chariot;
Who walketh upon the wings of the wind;

Who maketh winds his messengers;
Flames of fire his ministers;
Who laid the foundations of the earth,
That it should not be moved for ever."
—*Psalm 104: 3-5.*

It thus appears that the three great pages of nature's book—the heaven, the earth, and the sea—are sources of information and inspiration for the Hebrew makers of poetry; and it is equally clear that these poets bowed down in holy reverence before God's works of creation.

These Hebrew poets were equally reverent in the presence of life; here also is seen their high seriousness. They endeavored to grasp life in its manifoldness, life in its fullness, life in its wholeness. Especially in The Psalms is this evident. Professor Prothero, of England, begins his book, "The Psalms in Human Life," with an informing and romantic paragraph, a part of which we quote:

"Above the couch of David, according to rabbinical tradition, there hung a harp. The midnight breeze, as it rippled over the strings, made such music that the poet king was constrained to rise from his bed, and, till dawn flushed the eastern skies, he wedded words to the strains. The poetry of that tradition is condensed in the saying that the book of Psalms contains the whole music of the heart of man, swept by the hand of his Maker. In it are gathered the lyrical burst of his tenderness, the moan of his penitence, the pathos of his sorrow, the triumph of his victory, the despair of his defeat, the firmness of his confidence, the rapture of his assured hope."[3]

The authors of the psalms studied at first hand the copiousness and complexities of humanity and re-

[3] J. Prothero, "The Psalms in Human Life," p. 1.

ceived into themselves the whole throbbing drama of human life. They sang its Misereres and they sang its Jubilates; its Il Penserosos and its L'Allegros; and these experiences, expressed in art form, are in a collection or anthology which begins with a Benedictus and ends with a hallelujah. But between this felicitous beginning and this devotional ending the poets of psalmody reverently amplify all the universal and fundamental states of the human soul and all the moods of the human mind.

In their investigations of human life these poets turned not to books but to life for first-hand information and inspiration. They thus have come down to us as thinkers, as seers who saw life whole; who saw in life its divine origin and, therefore, produced divine songs. They expressed their high seriousness in this spirit which is the keynote of the songs that stir the mind and that steal into the soul.

With this view, though limited, of the technique of Hebrew poetry, and of the attitude of mind and heart of poets towards their work, the next step is an adventure into the soul of the poetry that they have written. What is poetry's soul? Perhaps the best answer is to keep before us another question: What is a poet? The implication in this question is that what appears as of worth or artistic value in a poem must exist first in the poet. Agreeable to this idea are the French proverb, "The style is the man himself," and the equally clear idea of Goethe that no one can escape putting a part of himself into his works. We, therefore, conclude that the soul of Hebrew poetry is the direct expression of the soul of the Hebrew poet.

What manner of soul is his? It is a soul of a good quality, of a spiritual quality because it participates in the eternal, immortal, and invisible realm where God is. By this participation the poet accepts the major idea of the universe, God. He is constantly contemplating the Supreme Being; and, as his knowledge of God grows from more to more he finds himself saying, "I believe in God"; and this belief becomes so fixed a possession of his soul that it gives force and color to all his works. Since, therefore, God is in all his thoughts, the mind of God enters into his poetry and it becomes theocentric. In God it lives, moves, and has its being.

This divine inbreathing distinguishes the psalms from all other lyrics and Proverbs from all other treatises on ethics. Truly the soul of this poetry begins and ends in Jehovah. Truly its soul is divine and makes the songs divine. I here quote two stanzas from one of these divine songs:

"Thou shalt arise, and mercy yet
Thou to mount Sion shalt extend:
Her time for favour which was set,
Behold, is now come to an end.
Thy saints take pleasure in her stones,
Her very dust to them is dear.
All heathen lands and kingly thrones
On earth thy glorious name shall fear.

"God in his glory shall appear,
When Sion he builds and repairs.
He shall regard and lend his ear
Unto the needy's humble pray'rs:
Th' afflicted's pray'r he will not scorn.
All times this shall be on record:

And generations yet unborn
Shall praise and magnify the Lord."[4]

These beautiful stanzas have a hopeful sound; they are "a lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice"; they are like "apples of gold in network of silver" to the exiles whose beloved city of Zion is in almost irreparable ruins. Here the exile is heartened with the hope that the night of his sorrow is at an end and that it will soon be daybreak. A new day is about to dawn when the sun will shine down upon repaired and rebuilt Zion. Is not the soul of this poetry the voice of God?

Vitally associated with the poet's intense consciousness of God is the poet's belief in the existence of the human soul and in the potentialities and possibilities of that soul, especially in its ability to receive unto itself the things of God. "Deep calleth unto deep." Thus the God-breathed soul of man, according to the Hebrew poet, finds its fellowship in the Author of souls, who is God. In this inner shrine the poet beholds God in fellowship with his highest created work; for King David speaks in this wise:

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that thou visitest him?
For thou hast made him but little lower than God,[5]
And crownest him with glory and honor."
—*Psalm 8: 4, 5.*

From this it is evident that man, who is made in the image of God in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, writes the best poetry when he is most like his

[4] Scottish Version.
[5] Hebrew term is *Elohim*, God.

Creator; for since art breathes the spirit of desire for a better world—yea, even for the best possible world —and since this is particularly true of poetry, the soul finds no rest and no contentment and no peace until it finds these in God.

The soul of Hebrew poetry is the spiritual meeting of God and man. This glorious fact makes the poetry of the Bible, in a most comprehensive sense, the literature of power and much more than the literature of knowledge.

It is in this body of Biblical poetry that we deeply learn the poetic truth first expressed by Aristotle and repeated by Sir Philip Sidney, by Matthew Arnold, by Dr. Edward Dowden, and by other constructive readers and competent critics, that poetry is the best instrument or medium for the expression of the truth about life. The final truth about life is not found in the "Critique of Pure Reason," but in the heart; for out of the heart are "the issues of life." In the soul's sacred shrine are fought life's greatest battles, and the best help comes from that truth which most comforts, aids, and strengthens the soul for its conflict with all inimical forces. That best help is found in the soul of the Bible poetry, in which no need is overlooked and no chord of the human heart is left untouched. This great art speaks a universal language, universal because it is the language of the heart.

It is, without doubt, on account of this universality that eminent men in all the major vocations of life "have found in the psalms their inspiration in life, their strength in peril, or their support in death." There is no "To be, or not to be," no "To sleep: perchance to dream," on these inspired pages; no "We

trust that somehow good will be the final goal of ill''; no ''I hope to see my Pilot face to face,'' but a faith that sees through and says with the sure touch of the artist, ''Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'' (A.V.) This assurance is the sunlight that suffuses all the sacred songs of Scripture. This is the climax of the soul of Bible poetry.

This soul of Bible poetry has certain attributes; namely, reliable information concerning the things about which the authors write; deep feeling that gives not only life but liveliness to the poets' thought; imagination, which creates pictures of the seen and the unseen; hearing, which listens in to the rhythm of life and nature; spirituality, which participates in the thought of God who ''is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.'' This soul with all its attributes speaks to the soul of man. ''Deep calleth unto deep.'' This poetry soul does more than make a lark sing a song at heaven's gate: it lifts the spirit of man into the very heaven of song where poetry is made.

Let me now discuss the purely poetic books of Scripture, those books which because of their truth and beauty can furnish us with profit and delight, which are true pieces of criticism of life. Which Bible books are truly poetic?

The Hebrew canon reckoned Job, Psalms, and Proverbs as poetic. These three were included in the Scriptures because they appeared to the makers of the canon to be poetic in a highly technical sense. The usual list of poetic books given by the Church of the

Reformation is: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.

For my purpose in this volume I find it necessary to depart from both of these classifications. I place first The Psalms, because they are the best expression of the Hebrew poetic genius, which is essentially lyrical. In the second place I name The Song of Solomon, or the Song of Songs, sometimes called Canticles because of the lack of any expressed didacticism; with Canon Driver I put in the third place The Lamentations of Jeremiah, a book sometimes called prophetic, which is manifestly a book of poems. The reason for not including Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes is another story and will be explained later in this volume.

I continue this chapter on poetry by giving a short account of each of these three books: Psalms, Song of Solomon, and Lamentations; and first of all, and that for many reasons, of the Psalter, the world's greatest anthology. This collection of lyrics, manifold in messages, may be divided into five parts, as some critics think, or into three parts, as other critics assert. These divisions seem to me to be more or less arbitrary and, in a measure, not natural. Better, I think, would it be were we to classify the psalms according to subject matter. Certainly for literary reasons this would be more convenient and more productive of literary perspective. Let us make the attempt.

The book of The Psalms reveals to a student of literature certain ideas that are the animus of the entire collection. This point of view seems to be more in keeping with literary endeavor. There is first the idea of God—the idea that God is supreme; that God

is King. In the second lyric, a reflective lyric, we read that the kings of the earth set themselves against the Lord who sits in majesty upon heaven's throne. In Psalm 24 the author says, "The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." (A.V.) The author of Psalm 5 offers a prayer: "Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God." By means of a careful reading of the poems the student can, for himself, complete this adventure in the study of the idea of God.

In the second place there is the idea of man's dependence upon God. I choose Psalm 51 as an excellent example of this idea. The opening verse vividly shows man's need of the Supreme Being:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness:
According to the multitude of thy tender mercies
blot out my transgressions."

Psalms that, like this one, humbly beg for pardon are called penitential. Of this type there are seven: Psalms 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143. In these psalms the poets pray: "Save me for thy lovingkindness' sake"; "I acknowledged my sin unto thee"; "O Jehovah, rebuke me not in thy wrath"; "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise"; "Hide not thy face from me in the day of my distress"; "Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications"; "Make haste to answer me, O Jehovah; my spirit faileth: Hide not thy face from me." Indeed the writers of the psalms in general, and of these seven in particular, do not lose sight of man's feeling of spiritual need. This feeling of Old Testament days is quietly and plainly expressed in New

Testament language in that prayer which Christ taught his disciples, which is commonly called The Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread."

Another quality found in the Psalter is an ever present idealism. It is a striking literary feature that the Psalter begins happily and ends triumphantly. Especially fitting is the last word, "Hallelujah," which being translated into English is, "Praise ye Jehovah." Here, in this term, we see that the imagination, which is a creative faculty of the soul, links the subjective interests of humanity with the interests of an ideal Personality who is always good and true and just. Because of this the poet can say:

"In peace will I both lay me down and sleep;
For thou, Jehovah, alone makest me dwell in safety."

—*Psalm 4: 8.*

The climax of this *Abendlied,* this tender evening song, is the same kind of idealism expressed by Robert Browning in "Pippa Passes":

"God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world!"

Poets like these—poets of idealism—never lose their way, never think that they are living in the worst possible world. They may, at times, feel as do all mortals who face the facts of life, the fog in their throats and the mist in their faces, but their idealism, born of an enduring faith, looks up and steadies them, sees through the clouds, and looks upon the heavens which declare the glory of God and the firmament which shows his handiwork. Living in the atmosphere of this idealism the poet can enthusiastically sing:

"Jehovah is good to all;
And his tender mercies are over all his works."
—*Psalm 145:9.*

Yes, and with greater confidence sing:

"They that trust in Jehovah
Are as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but
abideth for ever"
—*Psalm 125:1.*

A careful study of the poets of Palestine reveals the fact that some of their poems breathe love of country, and in a deeper sense than do the poems of secular poets. We recall the words of Horace, the Roman poet:

"*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.*"
(It is sweet and fitting to die for one's native country.)

We remember, too, the stirring lines of Scott:

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!"

But we remember nothing in non-Biblical literature comparable to the feeling of the Jewish exiles who were so lonely that they could not sing the Lord's songs in a strange land. Like "apples of gold in network of silver" this feeling comes down to us in sacred song. During the Exile, the Dispersion, the hearts of the people fondly turned to the Holy Land, turned to the Canaan that they loved. This homeward call is portrayed by the psalmist; and it is full of fervor and patriotic power:

"By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,

When we remembered Zion.
Upon the willows in the midst thereof
We hanged up our harps.
For there they that led us captive required of us songs,
And they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying,
Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sign Jehovah's song
In a foreign land?
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her skill.
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
If I remember thee not;
If I prefer not Jerusalem
Above my chief joy."

—*Psalm 137: 1-6.*

In the literature of patriotism there is nothing to surpass this outburst of feeling; and I am convinced that there is nothing quite its equal as an interpretation of heart yearning.

In the promotion of this feeling two powerful stimuli were at work—Church and State; for Mount Zion was, to these exiles, not only the visible center of their religion but also the city of their king, the regnant seat of David's royal line.

Every lover of literature is impressed with the poet's use of nature. To the ancient Hebrew poets, nature was always speaking. Her message to them may be appreciated not by talking about it but by hearing it in the poetry itself. Let this voice be heard in the "Song of the Thunderstorm," as Dr. Moulton has with not a little appropriateness named this lyric:

"Ascribe unto Jehovah, O ye sons of the mighty,
Ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength.

Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name;
Worship Jehovah in holy array.

"The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters:
The God of glory thundereth,
Even Jehovah upon many waters.
The voice of Jehovah is powerful;
The voice of Jehovah is full of majesty.
The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars;
Yea, Jehovah breaketh in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.
He maketh them also to skip like a calf;
Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild-ox.
The voice of Jehovah cleaveth the flames of fire.
The voice of Jehovah shaketh the wilderness;
Jehovah shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.
The voice of Jehovah maketh the hinds to calve,
And strippeth the forests bare:
And in his temple everything saith, Glory.

"Jehovah sat as King at the Flood;
Yea, Jehovah sitteth as King for ever.
Jehovah will give strength unto his people;
Jehovah will bless his people with peace."

—*Psalm 29.*

A study of this song makes it clear that the author is not using nature as a background for the purpose of explaining God's acts but for a description of the acts themselves. To the author, nature is the symbol of the majesty and power of God's voice:

> "The voice of Jehovah is powerful;
> The voice of Jehovah is full of majesty."
>
> —*Psalm 29: 4.*

After the same manner, in Psalm 148, the poet calls upon sun, moon, stars, and the heaven of heavens to

unite in chanting an anthem of praise to the Lord whose "name alone is exalted" and whose "glory is above the earth and the heavens."

The poet looks at the sky by day, and notices that the sun is cheerful and vigorous; he studies the nocturnal sky and hears the message that the moon sends to "the listening earth" as that lesser light "repeats the story of her birth." Psalm 148 is used by the poet to utter praise to Jehovah and he calls upon the whole of creation to do it.

The next kind of thought in the Psalter is the Messianic. Dear to the heart of the pious Jew was the idea of a Golden Age, the age of the Messiah, the Anointed One. Equally precious to every real Christian soul is the contemplation of the Messiah. Psalm 110 reveals the Lord's Anointed in his priestly work; for surely the loftiness of the language in that lyric cannot be referred to a human being—not even to a king—but to the special Servant of Jehovah. The Hebrew term Adonai, meaning Lord, is never, in Biblical language, used in any sense other than that of Deity.

Psalm 2 is "another of the same"; for the second strophe of that psalm declares that Jehovah talks to the Messiah, while in the third stanza the Messiah declares the Jehovah decree in relationship to himself. In Psalm 72 there is a beautiful tribute to the Messiah:

> "The just shall flourish in his days,
> and prosper in his reign:
> He shall, while doth the moon endure,
> abundant peace maintain.
> His large and great dominion shall
> from sea to sea extend:

It from the river shall reach forth
unto earth's utmost end."[6]

It may not seem possible to place all the psalms in the five divisions which I have named, but there is no psalm that may not find here its next of kin; for there is not a lyric in the collection unrelated to God and his dealings with men or their relationships to him. To some it may seem even peculiar that I have not given a division to the psalms of praise. The reason for my not doing so is that praise to God is the golden chain which binds all parts of the Psalter in the precious bundle of superlative poetry.

Before passing to the study of another poetic book it is necessary to say that there never has been in literature a more perfect picture of human life than that which is portrayed in this hymn book of the ages which deals with all that is universal and fundamental in humanity. Once more I quote Prothero: "In every country the language of The Psalms has become part of the daily life of nations, passing into their proverbs, mingling with their conversation, and used at every critical stage of their existence."[7]

Truly the Psalter contains literature for kings, for subjects, for all classes and conditions everywhere. We conclude this study of the Psalter by quoting its last lyric in the translation of The Jewish Publication Society of America. This translation keeps near the original language:

"Hallelujah.
Praise God in His Sanctuary;
Praise Him in the firmament of His power.

[6] Scottish Version.
[7] J. Prothero, "The Psalms in Human Life," p. 2.

Praise Him for His mighty acts;
Praise Him according to His abundant greatness.
Praise Him with the blast of the horn;
Praise Him with the psaltery and harp.
Praise Him with the timbrel and dance;
Praise Him with stringed instruments and the pipe.
Praise Him with the loud-sounding cymbals.
Praise Him with the clanging cymbals.
Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord.
Hallelujah."

—*Psalm 150:1-6.*

The Song of Solomon, or the Song of Songs,[8] is, as its name indicates, a most excellent type of poem. Being of a singable nature it is distinctively poetic. Of this poem there have been several interpretations, some of which we shall now consider.

From the very earliest times the Jews applied this poem to "The Heavenly Solomon and to His Spouse," the Church. In favor of this interpretation, this allegorical interpretation, are certain other parts of the sacred Scriptures. Isaiah, in speaking of this most holy alliance between Jehovah and Israel, says, "Thy Maker is thine husband." (A.V.) Corresponding to this is the mystic language of the Apocalypse: "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." (A.V.) This, moreover, has been almost the universal belief of the Christian Church. According, therefore, to both the Ancient Jewish Church and to the Christian Church this production is not a mere sentimental song, an epithalamium or marriage ode, but a holy song about God and his Church. This idea is holy, beautiful, and mystical. In his discussion of this matter Paul says, "This is a great mystery: but

[8] *Shir Hashshirim* in the Hebrew.

I speak concerning Christ and the church." (A.V.) Doubtless this allegorical interpretation is the reason for its being included in the canon of Hebrew Scripture.

More than a century and three quarters ago Bishop Lowth, in his lectures at Oxford, stated it as his belief that this Song of Solomon is idyllic in character, but that idea, with reason, has been abandoned; for an idyl is a little picture, chiefly of lowly life, as in Theocritus' "Songs of the Reapers"; or, Burns's "Cotter's Saturday Night"; or, Whittier's "Snowbound." The Song of Songs is not like any one of these and does not agree with our belief about idyllic poetry. It is not sufficiently simplex; it is duplex in form, with its royal palace, and its rural retreat "far from the madding crowd."

Other critics have contended that the book is of a dramatic nature. In defense of this contention there are two kinds of interpretation. One explanation contends that Solomon is the only lover; and the other that there are two lovers, Solomon and a young shepherd. The first theory accepts two principal characters: Solomon and the Shulammite maiden; the second, three: Solomon, the Shulammite, and the shepherd. Because of its clearness and the appropriateness of its language I give Canon Driver's version of the interpretation:

"There are *three* principal characters, viz., Solomon, the Shulammite maiden, and her shepherd lover. A beautiful Shulammite maiden, surprised by the king and his train on a royal progress in the north (ch. 6:11, 12), has been brought to the palace at Jerusalem (ch. 1:4, etc.), where the king hopes to win her

affections, and to induce her to exchange her rustic home for the honor and enjoyments which a court life could afford. She has, however, already pledged her heart to a young shepherd; and the admiration and blandishments which the king lavishes upon her are powerless to make her forget him. In the end she is permitted to return to her mountain home, where, at the close of the poem, the lovers appear hand in hand (ch. 8:5), and express, in warm and glowing words, the superiority of genuine, spontaneous affection over that which may be purchased by wealth or rank (vs. 6, 7)."[9]

Another critic who adheres to the principal character idea concludes that The Song of Solomon is a drama and so definitely dramatic that he divides it into five acts and fourteen scenes.[10]

One of my university professors, the late Dr. Morris Jastrow, of the University of Pennsylvania, looks upon The Song of Solomon as a collection of folk songs brought together by some editor, or more probably by some editors, who may have intended to give a semblance of literary unity to the collection:

"If that was the case—and the question is one to which a categorical answer can hardly be given—the unity is purely artificial, by which I mean that the separate songs to be distinguished are originally independent compositions and that any attempt to string them together spoils their beauty and interferes with their understanding and appreciation. For the songs are folk songs, and folk poetry does not indulge in elaborate composition. It is marked rather by its brevity—by its limitation to one or two thoughts or to a few pictures, not by a long train of

[9] S. R. Driver, "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament," pp. 437, 438.

[10] W. E. Griffis, "The Love Song of the Bible."

thought carried through with logical precision, such as marks a literary composition produced with conscious and persistent effort. The folk lyric suggests the brevity of the love kiss and the fleetingness of the love sigh." [11]

From this passage it is evident that Dr. Jastrow thinks that the Song of Songs (*Shir Hashshirim*) is a congeries of independent love songs of a secular nature. Indeed in another passage he is convinced that the work cannot in any sense be allegorical; cannot be a literary unit. He concludes: "The starting point in the case of the Song of Songs must, therefore, be to take the book for what it clearly is, a continuous ecstasy on the theme of sexual love," though in this conclusion he denies that there is either vulgarity or salaciousness in the Song of Songs.

Dr. Moulton's view is that this poem is a lyric idyl. The internal evidence which the poem furnishes has much to commend it; namely, refrains and appropriate parallelisms. However, Dr. Moulton's interpretation is against the idyllic idea; for he says, referring to what he calls first in the series of idyls:

"The first presents the wedding day, its personages being the king, the bride, and her escort, the chorus of daughters of Jerusalem. It opens outside the palace." [12]

Certainly all this is less than idyllic; but all interpretations seem to have their difficulties. The difficulties have apparently not frightened scholars; for there are yet other expositions. Our purpose is not to tell about difficulties and to name, though briefly,

[11] M. Jastrow, "The Song of Songs," p. 11.
[12] R. Moulton, "The Literary Study of the Bible," p. 212.

theories, but to suggest to the student the need for humility and care in reading the Song of Songs.

I add one more interpretation, that of Professor John E. McFadyen, of the University of Glasgow. After discussing some of the interpretations he says:

"The true view of this perplexing book appears to be that it is, as Herder called it, 'a string of pearls'—an anthology of love or wedding songs sung during the festivities of the 'king's week,' as the first week after the wedding is called in Syria. Very great probability has been added to this view by the observations of Syrian customs made by Wetzstein in his famous essay on 'The Syrian Threshing Board,' and first thoroughly applied by Budde to the interpretation of the Song. Syrian weddings, we are told, usually took place in March, ch. 2:11 ff. The threshing floor is set on a sort of platform on the threshing board covered with carpets and pillows; and upon this throne, the 'king and queen,' i.e., the bride and bridegroom, are seated, while the guests honor them with song, game, and dance. This lasts for seven days (cf. Genesis 29:27; Judges 14:12); and the theory is that in the Song of Songs we have specimens of the songs sung on such an occasion. In particular, it is practically certain that ch. 6:13 to 7:9 is the song which accompanied the 'sword dance' (as the last words of ch. 6:13 should probably be translated) performed by the bride on the eve of her wedding day. This would explain the looseness of the arrangement, no special attempt being made to unify the songs, though it may be conceded that the noble eulogy of love in ch. 8:6, 7, as it is the finest utterance in the book, was probably intended as a sort of climax." [13]

There are many other interpretations, but from those mentioned in this chapter it is evident that there

[13] J. E. McFadyen, "An Introduction to the Old Testament," pp. 285, 286.

is at least one point of agreement; namely, that the love portrayed in the book is not sensual, but such as knit the soul of David to Jonathan or bound the hearts of Ruth and Naomi, or gives continuous charm to the romance of Isaac and Rebekah. It is agreed also that the love is expressed in poetry of exquisite beauty, but the question as to the kind of poetry has baffled most recent and contemporary critics. Perchance the reason for so many explanations and even conjectures is the attempt to force Hebrew poetic thought into European molds. Let us see.

It surely is a fact that the Hebrew mind did not classify poetry after the manner of the Greek, Romance, Teutonic, or Anglo-Saxon thinkers. It appears also that we cannot fairly claim that these authors of Hebrew poetry followed entirely the naïve promptings of the heart; and I am not convinced that the *naïveté* theory of folk poetry can adequately explain the powerful poetic appeal in the Song of Songs, an appeal lasting centuries, an appeal that has suffered no diminution by the touch of time. There must be another explanation, even if it be impossible to find a European name to give it. Of what we mean by drama, idyl, folklore, the Hebrew poet knew nothing, but he did feel and know how to write poetry. All, therefore, that we can say with certainty about this book, The Song of Solomon, is that it is a poem expressing the deep attachment of one heart for another; and since it is a Hebrew poem its structure is antiphonal. The musical response meant more to the author of such a poem than anything to which we give the name dialogue.

Is this antiphonal song more than secular? My

conviction is that it is more than secular; for Hebrew poetry is first and foremost religious poetry. By analogy this poem is religious. It is more than secular because of the psychic power resident in it. The reverent soul feels the power of its religious voice. Here again, "Deep calleth unto deep." It is further to be observed that no folk song has ever put its imprimatur on the thought of the world as has this beautiful poem. Moreover the artistry in this poem is superior to what is ordinarily known as folklore. There has been so much parrot repetition recently of the folklore idea that it seems necessary to lift up a voice against the attempt to lower the evidently intended religious value of Solomon's Song.

To appreciate local color in this poem one must keep in mind its Oriental character. A sensuousness foreign to the Occidental mind pervades the pages of the Song of Songs. Before the eye of the poet are doves that hide in the clefts of the rock; gazelles that feed among the lilies; beautiful foliage; sweet flowers that delight the eye and pleasantly satisfy the sense of smell with a redolence of nature's own charms. He is filled with the thought that nature never betrays the heart that loves her; and this gives intensity to his theme about a love that many waters cannot quench. The maiden as she thinks of her beloved says, "I am my beloved's; and his desire is toward me." This is the language of Japan.

The style of the poem seems perfectly appropriate to the thought. There is a quick-moving rhythm promoted by a close adherence to that which is undoubtedly the vernacular, the language of living men. This patois is charming in its raciness. An example

of this is the abbreviation of the relative pronoun and its coalition with the next word. *Asher hammelek* is shortened and unified thus: *Shehammelek*. This kind of device gives energy and vivacity to the style.

This poem, The Song of Solomon, because it is so free from didacticism, and because it is so artistic is, I am convinced, Hebrew poetry's contribution to the æsthetics of religion. Surely this is the very soul of poetry: it is poetry made more beautiful by religion:

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but will still keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing."[14]

Religious poetry is a thing of beauty and of ever-flowing joy. The God who lives in such poetry brings us into his banqueting house and his banner over us is love. Poetry like this was not born to die.

The title of the book of Lamentations names the Prophet Jeremiah as the author of this unusual series of poems; and I am so naming him in spite of the plausible arguments of some recent writers who attempt to set aside the unanimous verdict of antiquity. I have examined these recent views, but they do not seem to me convincing. I am, therefore, inclined to accept the Jeremiah authorship.

These poems written by Jeremiah are, therefore, both genuine and authentic; genuine because written by the person whose name they bear; authentic because the author was an eyewitness of facts of which he treats. There is truth in the poems. The author

[14] Keats, "Endymion."

of this truth was a contemporary who had first-hand information concerning the lamentable condition of Jerusalem, dishonored, desolate, devastated. The ruthless work of the king of Babylon was seen on every side. He had made a solitude and called it peace. Under these conditions Jeremiah could not have written any other kind of poetry than the elegiac strains found in the series called Lamentations. Jerusalem, standing as a woman in tears, is personified to symbolize the depth of grief to which even a city can sink: it has personal sorrow:

"She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on
her cheeks;
Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her:
All her friends have dealt treacherously with her;
they are become her enemies."
—*Lamentations 1: 2.*

These poems are, in plain language, the poetry of sorrow. Elegy is the poetry of sorrow and there is no other type of literature that in all ages and climes has adhered more relevantly to its purpose; and Jeremiah's poems have set the very highest standard for the expression of grief. His work is not a mere description of sorrow but a significant and notable interpretation of it. His poetry is not a bitter diatribe against sorrow but a deep emotional and spiritual reflection upon it and its mission. His elegy may justly be called "In Darkest Jerusalem and the Way Out." Most of the poetry is steeped in tears. *Hic sunt lacrimae.*[15] But there is one spot where the Sun is casting the holy glance of his beams. Come hither and look; for the Sun is shining:

[15] "Here are tears."

"It is of Jehovah's lovingkindnesses that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.
They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.
Jehovah is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.
Jehovah is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.
It is good that a man should hope and quietly wait for the salvation of Jehovah.
It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

. . . . .

For the Lord will not cast off for ever.
For though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.
For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

—*Lamentations 3: 22-27; 31-33.*

This passage shows how poetry may lift sorrow from sordidness into the more excellent glory of a deeply emotional and spiritual life so that even in the valley of humiliation the troubled spirit may find God and his angels. Thus sorrow, when suffused with sunshine, becomes not an escape from trouble but an explanation of how to bear it; an interpretation of how to bear the ills of life with equanimity and with true fortitude. Jeremiah knows nothing of the poetry of escape or refuge, but he understands that poetry which bears the burden and heat of the day; which seeks no refuge from that heat and that burden be they ever so irksome and unpleasant; which shuns no load be it ever so heavy; and which avoids no upward struggle be it ever so fierce.

For this thought I am indebted to a contemporary British poet, Lascelles Abercrombie, who was quoted recently in an issue of The British Weekly. I use the paragraph there quoted:

"The poetry of refuge harmonizes life by leaving out or modifying the discordant tones; the poetry of interpretation brings them in, and insists on them, because it can resolve them into an ultimate harmony. The world of interpretation is then the world of great poetry, and it is more than a jingle of words to say that the greatness of poetry is the greatness of its significance. For this means that its greatness is the greatness of the scope of its unifying harmony."

This idea, of course, makes Jeremiah more than the weeping prophet of tradition: it makes him the hopeful thinker on cloudy and dark days. The greatness of these poems, not essays, is the greatness of the poet's ability to bring the heterogeneous elements of life into a hopeful homogeneity or universal plan. He sees that Israel shall not grovel forever in sin; and he knows that the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will bring victory, the victory of righteousness, to the house of David. Jeremiah looked into his own soul and beheld sorrow; looked out upon Jerusalem and witnessed sin and sadness; looked up to the hills and had a vision of victory; for though troubled on every side he was by no means distressed and though perplexed he refused to remain in despair and though greatly cast down he believed that wrong would not always sit on the throne:

"For the Lord will not cast off for ever."
—*Lamentations 3: 31.*

Thus the five poems that make the book of Lamentations are more than a mere description of Jeremiah's sorrow and of Jerusalem's sin: they are illuminated interpretations of sin and its sadness and of offered salvation and its future glory. The man who had seen affliction became prophetic and saw the glory of the Lord rising upon his loved city and nation. In agreement with his thought is that of the psalmist:

> "For his anger is but for a moment;
> His favor is for a life-time:
> Weeping may tarry for the night,
> But joy cometh in the morning."
>
> —*Psalm 30: 5.*

Jeremiah, in his poignant acknowledgments of Jerusalem's humiliation, never loses sight of God's plans for the people of Israel. He admits the irony that falls from unfriendly lips:

> "They hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying,
> Is this the city that men called The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?"
>
> —*Lamentations 2:15.*

But he courageously accepts the truth of it and says:

> "Jehovah is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him."
>
> —*Lamentations 3: 25.*

or:

> "Turn thou us unto thee, O Jehovah, and we shall be turned;
> Renew our days as of old.

But thou hast utterly rejected us;
Thou art very wroth against us."
—*Lamentations 5: 21, 22.*

It is even thus that the faith of this poet triumphs not by escaping from sorrow but by taking into account all the ills of life, and by the power of his faith accepting the good and the ill in life in order to bring all things into subjection to the ultimate harmony of God's final plan where wrong will be placed on the scaffold and right will be placed on the throne, where God standeth "within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

Similar in thought is the faith of Father Ryan's poem, "Song of the Mystic," the scene of which is the "Valley of Silence." In this valley the soul of the poet found relief; for it was an illuminated valley. For lack of space I quote only three stanzas:

"Long ago was I weary of voices
Whose music my heart could not win;
Long ago was I weary of noises
That fretted my soul with their din;
Long ago was I weary of places
Where I met but the human—and sin.

"And still did I pine for the Perfect,
And still found the false with the true;
I sought 'mid the human for heaven,
But caught a mere glimpse of the blue:
And I wept when the clouds of the mortal
Veiled even that glimpse from my view.

"Do you ask me the place of the Valley,
Ye hearts that are harrowed by care?
It lieth afar between mountains,
And God and his angels are there:

And one is the dark mount of sorrow,
And one the bright mountain of prayer."

These glory-smitten mountain peaks of sorrow and sunshine are the poet's interpretation of human experience. I have used these stanzas to illustrate for the young reader the idea that Jeremiah's Lamentations are bounded by two mountains, one of which is robed in sorrow and the other suffused with sunlight. Jeremiah says:

"He hath made me to dwell in dark places, as those that have been long dead."
—*Lamentations 3:6.*

But he also says:

"Jehovah is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him."
—*Lamentations 3:24.*

Surely his five poems are not the poetry of escape, but that of interpretation. Like Jeremiah the real poets of all ages know that, at times, the veil of sorrow may be found on the brow of beauty; and that the pendulum may occasionally swing between a smile and a tear.

Another aspect of The Lamentations may be named, the technique or form of expression. The book of Lamentations is made up of five poems or elegies. The authority of Dr. Richard Moulton is against my naming them poems, and I am sorry to disagree with so eminent a scholar, but in the book's five divisions I find nothing either in form or spirit indicative of the essay. The presence of acrostic arrangements in most of the divisions shows not only that the author

felt that he was writing poetry but that as an artist he knew what he was doing. In the first four poems the fact that each verse begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet makes it attractive to the eye of the reader, furnishes a pleasant sound to the ear (all poetry should be read aloud), and greatly helps the memory. The American Standard Version has by a series of letters indicated this for the person who reads the Bible in an English translation. Thus in its attempt, at least, it endeavors to assist the student who is studying the Bible as literature.

The general thought of The Lamentations is elegiac and the technique is acrostic. These and other facts will assure the student that when he reads Jeremiah's book he is reading poetry of a good quality.

In this poetry of a good quality emotion and form are so blended that the poems are at once a work of art, setting forth a mood of deep reflection and a belief that God can raise up fallen Jerusalem and make the place of his worship glorious, so that the people may sing again as if animated by a celestial enthusiasm:

"How lovely is thy dwelling-place,
O Lord of hosts, to me!
The tabernacles of thy grace
how pleasant, Lord, they be!
My thirsty soul longs veh'mently,
yea faints, thy courts to see:
My very heart and flesh cry out,
O living God, for thee." [16]

—*Psalm 84: 1, 2.*

[16] Scottish Version.

In bringing this chapter on Hebrew poetry to a close it is necessary to pay tribute to authors who were well equipped with that knowledge which penetrates the life of the soul. For purposes of real poetry their knowledge was adequate. It is further necessary to note that their thought, their knowledge, is vitalized by deep, living, and stirring emotion; that their vision saw through to the spiritual values of life; and that their imagination was constantly forming images and pictures of truth. Only minds and hearts so furnished with knowledge, emotion, vision, and imagination could have written the world's best poetry.

How choice are the following selections the sympathetic reader knows:

"Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south;
Blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may
flow out.
Let my beloved come into his garden,
And eat his precious fruits."

—*Song of Solomon 4:16.*

In introducing the next selection of poetry to be included in this chapter few words are needed; for one may as well try to praise the rose or to produce in words the sweetness of the violet as to praise the more excellent glory of Bible poetry. It is better to see the rose, to smell the violet, to read the poetry.

I take pleasure in ending the chapter with the use of a poem which shows how majestic and sublime and beautiful poetry can be. This poem has gathered into it the deep and universal need for worship; and for God as the supreme object of the worship which has asked the love and demanded the reverence of men

from age to age. This worship reaches from the people of earth to the throne of God. The poem is a trumpet call to the whole world to worship God.

I give this poem in its Scottish translation, and give it without comment, for its appeal is so universal that it transcends clime, language, and race:

"All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,
Come ye before him and rejoice.
Know that the Lord is God indeed;
Without our aid he did us make:
We are his flock, he doth us feed,
And for his sheep he doth us take.

"O enter then his gates with praise,
Approach with joy his courts unto:
Praise, laud, and bless his name always,
For it is seemly so to do.
For why? the Lord our God is good,
His mercy is for ever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure."

—*Psalm 100.*

CHAPTER IV

PROPHETIC LITERATURE

In teaching non-Biblical literature it is a matter of universal critical judgment that an understanding of the lives of men of letters is of mutual helpfulness in the study of their works. For purely literary reasons, therefore, it appears to be necessary to know what we can of the authors of prophetic literature.

In attaining this knowledge our first care is to know the meaning of the term prophet; for confusion of ideas here is fatal to a proper comprehension of that considerable body of unique literature which is peculiar to the Bible. Nowhere else is there such writing. Even the Greek oracle must not be compared; for as far as the East is distant from the West so far is the Greek method of interpreting the will of the gods distant from the Hebrew method of knowing the will of Jehovah. Since this is so we shall not be at liberty to use the comparative method of literary criticism; nor will the historic method be available, for there is nothing in pre-Hebrew experience to give us either information or light to assist us in appraising the writing which is, like Melchizedek, "without father, without mother, . . . having neither beginning of days nor end of life," but reflecting the mind of the eternal Jehovah; for each prophetic message is based on "Thus saith the

Lord.'' The men who have written this great body of truth are called prophets. In order, then, to make our thought definite we ask: What is meant by the term prophet? ''What's in a name?'' Or what profit is there in a discussion about a word? ''Much every way'': chiefly because to that word ''prophet'' has been committed the meaning of the oracles of God.

The traditional, but not the correct explanation of the term is that the prophet is a foreteller of events. That explanation is but one third true; for this unique man of God is a forthteller, or interpreter, of the mind and will of God in reference to the past, the present, and the future. This fundamental idea being clear, the way is open to speak of names applied to him who is a prophet. There are, first of all, a number of names whose purpose it is to describe him absolutely. In this list is the term ''seer,'' which means one who looks beyond phenomena to noumena, beyond things carnal to things spiritual. Next there is the term *''Ish Haruach,''* which means a man of the spirit, or an inspired one. Another list of names shows how he is related to God. He is called a ''man of God'' [1]; he is called a servant of God.[2] Then, too, in relation to men the prophets are called shepherds and watchmen.[3] In this last connection a reading of Deuteronomy 18:18, 19 will show the meaning of the application to human society of the prophetic office:

''I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I

[1] I Samuel 2:27.
[2] II Kings 17:23.
[3] Isaiah 62:6.

shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

While we speak of terms and the use of them it is fitting to point out that between the prophetic gift and the prophetic office there is a difference. This is apparent from a part of the book of Numbers which I quote:

"And Moses went out, and told the people the words of Jehovah: and he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the Tent. And Jehovah came down in the cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and put it upon the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, but they did so no more.

"But there remained two men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the Spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but had not gone out unto the Tent; and they prophesied in the camp."

—*Numbers 11: 24-26.*

These persons had the prophetic gift only. On the contrary men like Isaiah and Ezekiel had the gift and exercised it within the prophetic office.

It will profit us in our study of prophetic literature to know the types of men who exercised the prophetic gift within the prophetic office. Since the office was not hereditary it was possible for these men of God to come from any tribe, in any part of the country, or from any stratum of society.

Of royal blood were Zephaniah, Daniel, Isaiah; of priestly rank, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Zechariah; of the serf class, Amos; of the middle class, Hosea. All of

these were true men of God, trustworthy servants of Jehovah, all were God-guided in the conveyance of truth; but the literary method of the impartation of that truth reveals prophetic individuality, unfolds either talent inherited or skill acquired. Striking evidences of heredity, environment, and training are found in their writings. Isaiah in sublimity of style and in majesty of thought is the Milton of antiquity. Hosea, because of the distressing social conditions of his day, was bowed down in spirit and was the Carlyle of long ago; Amos is the prototype of Burns, who hated sham and, further like Amos, was a member of the aristocracy of the fields. Isaiah's atmosphere is patrician; Hosea's is that of general social life; Amos' is that of the trees and the streams.

Besides the varied natural gifts, graces, and qualifications of the prophets there was the necessary call to make them authenticated spokesmen for Jehovah. This call came as administered by Jehovah himself. The Book of Amos makes this claim:

"And Jehovah took me from following the flock, and Jehovah said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel."

—*Amos 7:15.*

In The Book of Jeremiah a similar claim is made:

"Now the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations."

—*Jeremiah 1:4, 5.*

In The Book of Ezekiel most of the first two chapters of the book is given over to the fact that the word

of the Lord came expressly to the prophet. In Isaiah, ch. 6, there is the famous record of that prophet's being set apart or ordained to the special service of the Lord of Hosts. From these facts we learn not only the source of the prophet's inspiration, but that of his authority; we learn why these men of God prefaced their messages by the oft-recurring statement, "Thus saith the Lord."

We now turn to a study of the prophet's place in literature. This study shows that to Isaiah we must give first place. His book adequately measures up to the qualitative tests that may be used for the appraisal of a book of power literature.

Great names require no adornments and no titles. Isaiah, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, are names that need only to be spoken to learn how foursquare they sound, to see what is in a name. Isaiah, like Socrates, has a brief biography. We know that he was descended from the royal family; that he lived in the middle court of the city of Jerusalem; that he was married and was the father of two sons whose names are in his book; that he did his work during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah; and that he was a person of commanding influence and of unusual power. Such is his biography. Much we may conjecture, but this is all that we know. But his book! Perhaps no writing of antiquity has received more attention than has been lavishly, laboriously, and even lovingly bestowed on it. However, most of this devoted attention has been of the purely critical sort, the technical type. The attitude has been analytic rather than synthetic and for this reason the stress has been upon exegesis rather than upon

literature. Yet even the exegetes have been led to admire the beauties of Isaiah's book. Upon this book I am bestowing especial thought.

One of the necessary qualities of any literary production is unity, unity of design, unity of structure, unity of spirit. Has the patrician prophet's book this unity? Let us seek the answer in the book. Dr. Robinson, Professor of Hebrew and Cognate Languages in Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago, has put us very much in his debt by his studies in the book's unity. In the prophecy he finds that the phrase "Holy One of Israel" is used twenty-five times in Isaiah; and, but six times elsewhere in the entire Old Testament Scriptures. He shows that, in "First Isaiah," the name given by some critics to chs. 1 to 39, the phrase is used twelve times while in chs. 40 to 66, or "Second Isaiah," as the critics of modern times name these last chapters, the phrase in question is used thirteen times. From this balance or parallelism of usage, from this almost equal distribution, he concludes that the phrase "interlocks inseparably all the various portions with one another and stamps them with the personal imprimatur of him who saw the vision of the majestic God seated upon his throne high and lifted up, and heard the angelic choirs singing, 'Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.'" [4] The reader will see that here is one proof in favor of unity in Isaiah's book.

Further likenesses of style are found in both parts of the book. In the earlier chapters, as in the later ones, there are similar poetic embellishments. To be exact, in chs. 9:8 to 10:4 there is a poem of four

[4] G. L. Robinson, "The Book of Isaiah," p. 14.

strophes, and each of these beautifully organized strophes is followed by the musical refrain: "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." The same poetic mind is clearly evident in the well-planned ode of ch. 49. When we offer these poems as part proof of the unity of the book we are met by some critics who say that the two poems are different in style and, therefore, they could not be from the same head, heart, and hand. There are, it is true, some outward differences, but not more than would be expected from an author as he deals with varying moods or with different thoughts. The first poem is a *song of sin* while the second is a *song of salvation,* but the voice in each is the voice of Isaiah. His reverent readers hear his voice and when they hear the voice they know it and follow it. Voice is really the final arbiter in recognizing literary values. Is not the voice of Browning heard and known whether it speaks in "Rabbi Ben Ezra" or in "The Ring and the Book"? Isaiah's two poems, in like manner, have unity of voice.

Again, the literary unity and the organic wholeness of Isaiah's prophecies are seen in that part of his work which concerns itself with the future. In chs. 24 to 27 there is a picture in the foreground, a picture in which there are blackness and darkness and tempest, symbols of Jehovah's wrath that will be poured out without mixture upon an ungodly world; but in the background of that picture, far above the clouds and breaking through the clouds, there are streaks of light which are messengers that announce to Israel the dawn of a brighter day, a day of clear shining of heavenly light. This is prophetic

vision: It looks by faith into the future; and faith like this surely can "penetrate the darkest cloud earth ever stretched."

To the poet prophet all of this picture was a painting of the future, a picture of the future of Israel's rejoicing; and this because of bondage over and past. Yet even in the dark days of bondage the prophet bids the people sing of joys to be.

"Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust."

—Isaiah 26:19.

This beautiful imperative, "Awake," is carried over by Isaiah and used in Second Isaiah, ch. 52:1: "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion." Here is another proof that both parts of the book are by the same author. There are other proofs, but space forbids my continuing this. However, from the few facts of internal evidence it appears reasonable to conclude that the writing is not an organization of parts, not a congeries of conflicting elements of thought, but a healthy and a beautiful organism.

With this conclusion agree the facts of external evidence. Some of this evidence is found in II Chronicles 32: 32.

"Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his good deeds, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz, in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel."

The same prophet is alluded to in one of the Apocryphal writings, Ecclesiasticus 48: 22-25:

"For Ezekias had done the thing that pleased the Lord, and was strong in the ways of David his father, as Esay the prophet, who was great and faithful in

his vision, had commanded him. In his time the sun went backward, and he lengthened the king's life. He saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last, and he comforted them that mourned in Sion. He shewed what should come to pass for ever, and secret things or ever they came."

This citation from Ecclesiasticus, it is true, mentions Hezekiah, but according to some that establishes the historicity of First Isaiah only and proves nothing as to Second Isaiah. Have these critics overlooked the fact that the author of that Apocryphal book, in the passage quoted, attributes to Isaiah that prophetic foresight which by them is used as the real reason why Isaiah could not have written the second part of the prophecy? All that I am insisting upon is that the book quoted from is an historical book and it knows but one Isaiah: its historical evidence cannot be set aside by an unscholarly denial. In the same connection a similar observation seems appropriate concerning the evidence furnished by II Chronicles. That historical book knows but one Isaiah. Josephus, whose writings, we were told in college days, must be accepted with great caution, may also be used here in our line of presenting evidence.

Another line of proof, drawn from external evidence, has been pointed out by that prince of teachers and noted Semitic scholar, the late Dr. William Henry Green, of Princeton Theological Seminary; he notes a fact which others have overlooked, that of the twenty-one times Isaiah is quoted in the New Testament eleven are from Second Isaiah. With his usual scholarly accuracy he states another important fact,

that all versions include chs. 40 to 66; that this testimony was accepted for twenty-four centuries; and that the question of difference of style was not raised until chs. 40 to 66 were by some critics excluded on other grounds. The real reason for saying that Isaiah did not write these chapters is that some critics do not believe in prophetic foresight; and they then proceed to find stylistic differences to support their disbelief. This, I consider, is reasoning in a circle; they assume the whole point at issue and proceed to support their gratuitous and groundless assumption. Surely this is "begging the question."

In this whole matter I prefer to take the testimony of the centuries against the years; and this I do the more heartily because, though in some measure the style in Second Isaiah is different from that in the so-called First Isaiah, the voice of prophecy in each case is the voice of the only Isaiah known to antiquity; and, because internal evidence, such as we have offered, and external evidence, which we have cited, support the one Isaiah belief it seems reasonable to conclude that the book of Isaiah is an organism, a literary unit. This being so it stands the test of the most exacting requirement for a piece of good literature.

Has the book other literary qualities? Anyone who reads with his literary consciousness awake is impressed with Isaiah's fine ability in description. The record of his call to service is unsurpassed; for it is sublime and beautifully poetic in telling us in a great picture what God, his throne, and his heavenly retinue look like. We look at the picture and admire; for here

the work of this patrician poet is a vision of God in his holy temple:

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.

"Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven."

—*Isaiah 6:1-7.*

The style of this prophet calls for more than a passing comment; for it has been the admiration of the world's greatest Biblical scholars. In speaking of Isaiah's style Dr. Robinson, of Chicago, says that for versatility of expression and brilliancy of imagery Isaiah has no superior, nor even a rival; and Dr. Dillman, the noted German critic, asserts that every word from Isaiah stirs and strikes the mark. With these authors I am in hearty agreement; for I am convinced that if mastery of diction be a fine asset in the budget of a writer's experience Isaiah was superbly equipped.

I do not know whether Maupassant, the excellent

French author, was looking back to the diction of the ancient prophet, but I am certified in my own mind that he has expressed that which the prophet's diction certainly reveals. I quote the Frenchman whose own style has created the admiration of critics:

"Whatever the object examined there is but one noun to describe it, one verb to animate it, and one adjective to qualify it. Seek till you find them, this noun, this verb, and this adjective, and never be content with approximations." [5]

An example of this kind of writing we select from the words of Isaiah:

"And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as streams of water in a dry place, as the shade of a great rock in a weary land."

—*Isaiah 32: 2.*

Surely this kind of diction satisfies Maupassant's theory of composition.

Then, too, Isaiah's vocabulary is, though not extensive, selective, and withal characterized by catholicity of taste in the sources whence he got his words. A list of words and phrases taken entirely at random will show this; for it will be noticed that though the prophet had a keen eye for the moral significance of events, he was interested none the less in natural facts. The random list follows: sand of the sea, stem of a tree, well of water, bird's nest, ax, wilderness rock, gold of Ophir, garden of cucumbers, plumb line, plow, bruised grain, cart wheel, threshing machine, overflowing stream, falling tower, devouring fire,

[5] Guy de Maupassant, in preface to "*Pierre et Jean.*"

tempest, hailstones, tabrets and harps, idols, silver, gold, horses, camels, lions, fruit, wilderness, forest, habitation, caterpillars, locusts, lambs, goats, rams, vines, fig trees, roses, mountains. All these words and others he placed in well-ordered surroundings.

Furthermore this prophecy of Isaiah is made rich by an unusual literary eloquence, an eloquence that we wish to define and discuss. Isaiah was not an orator in the Greek sense. Neither is his prophecy an oration like Demosthenes' "*De Corona,*" where form and scientific organization of material count for so much. On the contrary the eloquence of the prophet consists in the psychic power of the message, a power that makes the reader feel that the writer has put himself unstintingly into what he has written; that convinces the reader of an unexpressed and a reserve power which distinguishes the man of eloquence from the man that is only a public speaker. When Isaiah finishes, the reader thinks that the half has not been told.

From the beginning of his book even unto the end of it there is sustained power. There is no lowering of the grand style, the sublime style. At the beginning he says:

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth."

—*Isaiah 1:2.*

Toward the end he says:

"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth."

—*Isaiah 62:1.*

And from this beginning to this ending there is the clear and strong voice of a man of power. When a master writes we read, and return to read. Such a master is Isaiah.

There are, however, other prophets whose works are of worth as pieces of literature. Isaiah does not bear the palm alone; for in all the prophetic writings there are certain qualities that make for good literature. There is, first, the matter of knowledge or reliable information concerning the subjects of which they speak or write. Isaiah's book—for I now discuss all the prophetic messages—gives evidence of wide knowledge not only of Palestine but of the nations round about. All the other prophets have knowledge in proportion to the major or minor nature of their works. By this we do not mean that one prophet is less inspired than another; we mean only to say that among the prophets there were individual differences in the matter of ability, and that God made use of that ability. In accordance with this belief it is easy to see why Amos is a minor writer; his knowledge is not so comprehensive as that of Isaiah; yet for the purpose of conveying one phase of the mind of God it is entirely reliable. Amos knows objective nature and the elemental forms of life as the rustic knows them. He is acquainted with the roaring of the lion, and quite reverently he says, "The Lord roareth from Zion." (A. V.) Isaiah would not say it that way, for the major prophet's knowledge is of a different sort. The other prophets by the same sign are major or minor in proportion to what they know, but because they have reliable information they write with that sureness of touch which reveals the artist.

Knowledge is necessary for any artistic work: it is basic. Zeal cannot take its place, for zeal without knowledge is a dangerous thing. Zeal, but not according to knowledge, has contributed nothing of real and permanent value to civilization, nothing to the world's progress, pleasure, and profit.

Imagination, too, of an unusually high order is found in the prophetic writings. The strong glow of this creative faculty of the soul adds beauty that is both profitable and pleasant. This kind of beauty is seen in the writings of these men of God. Isaiah, for example, takes some of the facts of nature, eternal nature, and out of these facts he paints a picture of the wilderness transformed:

"The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God."

—*Isaiah 35: 1, 2.*

The imagination which produced this picture was powerfully influenced by environment, for the idea is borrowed from the topography of the country. He drew from the country the facts his imagination needed. Hence he calls upon hedges, highways, springs of water, and vineyards.

This same author transcends the facts of nature and sees through to the palace of the King who sits in the heavens; and we have the poetry of the throne of God, poetry that declares the glory of "The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"

(A. V.), who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks and around whose throne there is a "rainbow . . . in sight like unto an emerald." (A. V.) Thus this poet's patrician imagination lifts our thoughts from an earthly throne in the old Jerusalem to the heavenly throne in the New Jerusalem.

Optimism is another quality of the literature written by the prophets. These poets of a past age believed that they could justify the ways of God to men: they sang the song of sin, but they sang the song of salvation also. They sang of darkest Jerusalem and Palestine, and they sang of the way out. They lifted their eyes to the hills there to look for the first sunlight of the coming golden age. Nor could they have done otherwise; for the Sun of Righteousness was already shining in their prophetic souls. With them it was already daybreak. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee," says Isaiah. It is a notable fact that Isaiah is the most optimistic of the prophets. Doubtless this bright hope is, in a large measure, due to the fact that he has the most complete view of the world and the most comprehensive knowledge of the hand of God in history. His knowledge, too, was ever growing from more to more.

While we give first place to Isaiah in his penetration of the dark clouds that often hung low over Israel's sky we must associate with him all the prophets who were as lights shining in dark places. The darkest earth-stretched clouds never caused these prophets to lose their way, for they bore aloft their torches, which lighted every step of the King's highway. These torches of optimism are at once the sym-

bols and the glory of the prophetic age. Each prophet was an optimist; each prophet was a torchbearer; each prophet carried the torch of Truth.

Not infrequently a quality of thought is better understood by first showing what it is not. What optimism is not may be seen in the thought of a modern poet who writes:

"The winds and the waves are wailing,
And the night is full of tears;
And over my spirit forebodings
Are borne from the coming years.

"I fear, and in dread I shiver,
At the thought of the coming years;
The winds and the waves are wailing,
And the night is full of tears." [6]

Compare with this dark thought the bright prophetic thought, and the value, for life, of optimism appears. Isaiah, when Israel's night was full of tears, looked to another day and said:

"Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for Jehovah will be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

—*Isaiah 60: 20.*

Linked with optimism is its necessary handmaiden, emotionalism. These two qualities are so joined that they lean upon each other for mutual support. When the prophets express a belief in the ultimate triumph and crowning glory of the Kingdom of God they so vitalize their belief that there goes out from them a psychic power that stirs the souls of their readers.

[6] George Woodberry.

This psychic power is unique; for it intensifies thought and makes that thought the literature of power. This power we name emotion. It is present in the writings of all the prophets, whose hearts glowed ere their tongues and pens gilded their messages.

Of all the prophets, however, it is Isaiah through whose writings this emotionalism is felt in greatest power. From the moment when this prophet saw the Lord "sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up," until he says of redeemed Israel, "Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God," there is a continuous flow of soul. It would be rank folly to utter one word in praise of the emotionalism found in the writings of this peerless prophet. Since this is so it is better to quote and admire. Of ransomed Israel he says:

"And the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."
—*Isaiah 35:10.*

The following passage shows how Isaiah feels about the majesty of God:

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall

run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

—Isaiah 40: 28-31.

Upon the question which is the greatest problem of Biblical theology this poet prophet manifests feeling deep and fine:

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

—Isaiah 53: 6.

Two more examples of the prophet's fine feelings, both of these connected with spiritual light, must suffice:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

—Isaiah 60:1-3.

This is the first quotation, and the second is like unto it:

"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."

—Isaiah 62: 1-3.

The same deep feeling is expressed by the Prophet Micah in his answer to the people when they ask what God would have them do; and his answer is without question the finest example of deep theological feeling in the Old Testament:

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

—*Micah 6: 8.*

Even so minor a prophet as Habakkuk when he attempts to picture the majesty of Jehovah is deeply stirred. Only one moved by the Spirit could say:

"God came from Teman,
And the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah
His glory covered the heavens,
And the earth was full of his praise.
And his brightness was as the light;
He had rays coming forth from his hand;
And there was the hiding of his power.
Before him went the pestilence,
And fiery bolts went forth at his feet.
He stood, and measured the earth;
He beheld, and drove asunder the nations;
And the eternal mountains were scattered;
The everlasting hills did bow;
His goings were as of old."

—*Habakkuk 3: 3-6.*

Ezekiel, too, was a man of easily stirred feelings. His soul was much moved at the sight of a valley of dry bones. The *ipsissima verba* will best illustrate his emotions:

"The hand of Jehovah was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of Jehovah, and set me

down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. And he caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord Jehovah, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy over these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of Jehovah. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah.

"So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and, behold, an earthquake; and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I beheld, and, lo, there were sinews upon them, and flesh came up, and skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

—*Ezekiel 37:1-10.*

Here is the story of a vision into which is poured the richest, most royal feeling of which even an inspired prophet is capable. Clear thinking marks the narrative but it is vitalized by the highly sensitized soul of the writer. This is the reason for its charm and for its psychic appeal, the very heart of which is expressed by the words, "O Lord Jehovah, thou knowest." Ezekiel knew God's program and he believed that the program would have a happy and successful

issue especially for the Jewish people. One with Ezekiel in this bright hope is Micah, who says:

"But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

—Micah 4:1, 2.

A quotation from a minor prophet will help to give, I think, an adequate idea of prophetic cheerfulness and of lively, hopeful outlook. I take it from the writing of Zephaniah in which he states his belief in Israel's restoration:

"At that time will I bring you in, and at that time will I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah."

—Zephaniah 3: 20.

How bright was that prospect! It cheered the exiles. Emotionalism, always a necessary quality in poetry, is psychically present in the work of the prophets, who were men of deep and lively feelings. Almost unexpectedly the reader comes upon passages of lyrical fervor which show the prophets' poetic attitude. When the Prophet Joel, for instance, describes the on-coming of God's terrible judgments he becomes a tongue of poetic fire:

"The earth quaketh before them; the heavens tremble; the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah uttereth his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word; for the day of Jehovah is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"

—*Joel 2:10, 11.*

The following words reveal the depth of the emotion of Jeremiah as he yearns for his people, as he pours forth his lamentation over the slain:

"Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"

—*Jeremiah 9:1.*

But the prophets were all men of fervid feelings. Daniel is amongst the number, and it is not possible to read him without being impressed with the eloquence of his emotion. To illustrate this idea two verses will be adequate:

"I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

—*Daniel 7:13, 14.*

I come now to consider another quality in the literature of prophecy, to wit, spirituality. This is more than imagination, more than knowledge, more than optimism, more than emotion: it is the expression

of that fellowship which man holds with his Maker, that fellowship which these inspired writers held with Jehovah who was the point of departure and return in all their thinking. Unlike great secular writers, these prophets were constantly in intimate communion with Jehovah. At best, Homer says, "Sing, O Goddess," or, Milton, "Sing, heavenly Muse," but Isaiah says, "I saw the Lord . . . upon a throne." This quality of spirituality is, I am convinced, the supreme test in literature; especially is this true of poetry, which is the best medium for the expression and interpretation of humanity's inner life. When, therefore, the prophets become poetic they get very near to God; and they frequently speak and write poetry. But whether they write in prose or in poetry, they lift up their eyes to the hills; yea, they look beyond the horizon to get a view of the Sun of Righteousness who arises upon them "with healing in his wings."

Ezekiel is so conscious of this intimacy with God that no fewer than thirty-eight times he uses the formula, "The word of Jehovah came unto me, saying," and its synonym, "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah," several times.

Isaiah's way of speaking of the seat of authority for his utterance is, "Thus saith the Lord." Jeremiah, like Ezekiel, uses the words, "The word of Jehovah came unto me, saying," or its variation, "The word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying." Daniel also has many ways of expressing his indebtedness to God, the Source of spiritual power. "The God of heaven," "God in heaven," "the Most High God," are a few of these expressions. Indeed, all

the prophets claim that their messages are God-breathed; and since God is a Spirit who does according to his will in the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, these especially guided prophets speak the language of the Promised Land.

In the prophetic writings this spirituality expresses itself, first, in the author's belief, not in impersonal goodness, not in an ideal personality, but in a personal God whose throne is in heaven and whose footstool is the earth, whose character is both Justice and Love. Of his justice, Isaiah says:

"Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this."

—*Isaiah 9:7.*

The love of this personal God for prodigal Israel when she comes to herself and says, "I will arise and go to my father," is sweetly and tenderly expressed by the Prophet Hosea as he speaks of the people of Israel:

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him."

—*Hosea 14:4.*

Again, the quality of spirituality in the prophetic writings appears in the prophetic belief in man's spiritual possibilities. According to Isaiah, man is a personality that can confer with a personal God, for he says:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah."

—*Isaiah 1:18.*

Appropriate is another verse from the same writer:

"But they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

—*Isaiah 40: 31.*

Amos, speaking of God, says:

"He . . . declareth unto man what is his thought."

—*Amos 4:13.*

This idea is present in the writings of all the prophets. It is further worthy of notice that whether the prophets write of political situations at home or of social conditions in Jerusalem and Canaan, or whether they discuss international relationships, both political and social, their chief aim is to bring Israel into spiritual fellowship with Jehovah, the one living and true God; and, if possible, to promote this fellowship. It was, no doubt, from the prophets that Thomas Carlyle borrowed his much quoted idea that the most important fact in a man's life is his religion. I share his belief and I am convinced that the high seriousness of life is spiritual, and that when literature expresses this high seriousness so that its spirituality reaches from the soul of man to the throne of God it has reached a state of perfection. The inspired prophets have performed this.

In pursuance of this claim for the prophets, it is worthy of observation that they looked to the Temple in the city of Jerusalem as a house of prayer and of worship, a place of holiness, the supreme meeting place between the personal Jehovah and the individual soul. To the devout Jew the Temple was

"Quadosh," sacred. Here appeared the Shekinah, the visible glory of Jehovah. Indicative of this thought are the words of Isaiah:

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

—Isaiah 2: 3.

I turn now to a survey of some of the literary forms used by the prophets. A favorite form is allegory, which, as every schoolboy knows, is extended metaphor. Ezekiel not only uses this form extensively but takes delight in it. A good example is found in Ezekiel, ch. 17:

"And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel; and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: A great eagle with great wings and long pinions, full of feathers, which had divers colors, came unto Lebanon, and took the top of the cedar: he cropped off the topmost of the young twigs thereof, and carried it unto a land of traffic; he set it in a city of merchants. He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful soil; he placed it beside many waters; he set it as a willow-tree. And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.

"There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, this vine did bend its roots toward him, and shot forth its branches toward him, from the beds of its plantation, that he

might water it. It was planted in a good soil by many waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine. Say thou, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it may wither; that all its fresh springing leaves may wither? and not by a strong arm or much people can it be raised from the roots thereof. Yea, behold, being planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the beds where it grew."

These ten verses constitute the main part of the allegory; the next ten are expository; and the last three verses are resumptive, for the prophet returns to the idea of a cedar in Lebanon in order that he may institute a comparison between the captive king who is in Babylon and the future King of Israel, a tender shoot from a high cedar, that will grow and flourish until its goodly boughs shall serve as a shade for the fowls of the heavens; and until the emancipated tree bears fruit. I here quote the last three verses:

"Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I will also take of the lofty top of the cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and I will plant it upon a high and lofty mountain: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all birds of every wing; in the shade of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I, Jehovah, have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I, Jehovah, have spoken and have done it."

Explanatory of this, and in his usual clear and concise form, is the language of Professor Skinner, who says:

"The great cedar is the house of David; the topmost bough which was taken to Babylon is the family of Jehoiachin, the direct heirs to the throne. The planting of the tender shoot in the land of Israel represents the founding of the Messiah's kingdom, which is thus proclaimed to be of transcendent earthly magnificence, overshadowing all the other kingdoms of the world, and convincing the nations that its foundation is the work of Jehovah himself."[7]

In this short passage we have the Messianic idea in its simplest and most characteristic expression. The hope of the future is bound up with the destiny of the house of David; and the reëstablishment of the kingdom in more than its ancient splendor is the great divine act to which all the blessings of the final dispensation are attached. This sample will serve as an illustration of what is meant by the use of allegory in the work of the prophets. Other examples are Ezekiel, chs. 16; 23; 27; 31; 34.

The ode is another literary form used by the prophets, and it is of frequent use. A good example is the third chapter of Habakkuk. This poem is an expression of the prophet's confidence in Jehovah:

"O Lord, I have heard the report of Thee, and am afraid;
O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years,
In the midst of the years make it known;
In wrath remember compassion.

[7] J. Skinner, "Ezekiel," in "The Expositor's Bible," p. 307. Published by Doubleday, Doran & Company. Used by permission.

God cometh from Teman,
  And the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah
His glory covereth the heavens,
  And the earth is full of His praise.
And a brightness appeareth as the light;
  Rays hath He at His side;
And there is the hiding of His power.
  Before Him goeth the pestilence,
And fiery bolts go forth at His feet.
  He standeth, and shaketh the earth,
He beholdeth, and maketh the nations to tremble;
  And the everlasting mountains are dashed in pieces,
The ancient hills do bow;
  His goings are as of old.
I see the tents of Cushan in affliction;
  The curtains of the land of Midian do tremble.
Is it, O Lord, that against the rivers,
  Is it that Thine anger is kindled against the rivers,
Or Thy wrath against the sea?
  That thou dost ride upon Thy horses,
Upon Thy chariots of victory?
  Thy bow is made quite bare;
Sworn are the rods of the word. Selah
  Thou dost cleave the earth with rivers.
The mountains have seen Thee, and they tremble;
  The tempest of waters floweth over;
The deep uttereth its voice,
  And lifteth up its hands on high.
The sun and moon stand still in their habitation;
  At the light of Thine arrows as they go,
At the shining of Thy glittering spear.
  Thou marchest through the earth in indignation,
Thou threshest the nations in anger.
  Thou art come forth for the deliverance of Thy people,
For the deliverance of Thine anointed;
  Thou woundest the head out of the house of the wicked,

Uncovering the foundation even unto the neck. Selah
Thou hast stricken through with his own rods the head of his rulers,
That come as a whirlwind to scatter me;
Whose rejoicing is as to devour the poor secretly.
Thou hast trodden the sea with Thy horses,
The foaming of mighty waters.
When I heard, mine inward parts trembled,
My lips quivered at the voice;
Rottenness entereth into my bones,
And I tremble where I stand;
That I should wait for the day of trouble,
When he cometh up against the people that he invadeth.
For though the fig-tree shall not blossom,
Neither shall fruit be in the vines;
The labour of the olive shall fail,
And the fields shall yield no food;
The flocks shall be cut off from the fold,
And there shall be no herd in the stalls;
Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will exult in the God of my salvation.
God, the Lord, is my strength,
And He maketh my feet like hinds' feet,
And He maketh me to walk upon my high places."[8]

Amongst the odes used in prophetic literature, we mention Isaiah's famous ironical picture of the king of Babylon. The prophet addressing Israel for her comfort, says:

"How hath the oppressor ceased!
The exactress of gold ceased!
The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked,
The sceptre of the rulers,
That smote the peoples in wrath
With an incessant stroke,

[8] Translation of The Jewish Publication Society of America.

That ruled the nations in anger,
With a persecution that none restrained.
The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet;
They break forth into singing.
Yea, the cypresses rejoice at thee,
And the cedars of Lebanon:
'Since thou art laid down,
No feller is come up against us.'

"The nether-world from beneath is moved for thee
To meet thee at thy coming;
The shades are stirred up for thee,
Even all the chief ones of the earth;
All the kings of the nations
Are raised up from their thrones.
All they do answer
And say unto thee:
'Art thou also become weak as we?
Art thou become like unto us?
Thy pomp is brought down to the nether-world,
And the noise of thy psalteries;
The maggot is spread under thee,
And the worms cover thee.'

"How art thou fallen from heaven,
O day-star, sun of the morning!
How art thou cut down to the ground,
That didst cast lots over the nations!
And thou saidst in thy heart:
'I will ascend into heaven,
Above the stars of God
Will I exalt my throne;
And I will sit upon the mount of meeting,
In the uttermost parts of the north;
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will be like the Most High.'
Yet thou shalt be brought down to the nether-world,
To the uttermost parts of the pit.

"They that saw thee do narrowly look upon thee,
They gaze earnestly at thee:
'Is this the man that made the earth to tremble,
That did shake kingdoms;
That made the world as a wilderness,
And destroyed the cities thereof;
That opened not the house of his prisoners?'
All the kings of the nations,
All of them, sleep in glory,
Every one in his own house.
But thou art cast forth away from thy grave
Like an abhorred offshoot,
In the raiment of the slain, that are thrust through with the sword,
That go down to the pavement of the pit,
As a carcass trodden under foot.
Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial,
Because thou hast destroyed thy land,
Thou hast slain thy people;
The seed of evil-doers shall not
Be named for ever.
Prepare ye slaughter for his children
For the iniquity of their fathers;
That they rise not up, and possess the earth,
And fill the face of the world with cities."[9]

—*Isaiah 14: 4-21.*

The discourse is another prominent prophetic literary form. In the Bible this form means not only the theme but the amplification of the theme. Sometimes the prophet calls this by a different name, namely, "burden." This Dr. Moulton calls the simplest form of prophecy, and he quotes Jeremiah:

"Behold, I am against them that prophesy lying dreams, saith Jehovah, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their vain boasting: yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; neither do they profit this people at all, saith Jehovah.

[9] Translation of The Jewish Publication Society of America.

"And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of Jehovah? then shalt thou say unto them, What burden! I will cast you off, saith Jehovah. And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of Jehovah, I will even punish that man and his house. Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbor, and every one to his brother, What hath Jehovah answered? and, What hath Jehovah spoken? And the burden of Jehovah shall ye mention no more: for every man's own word shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of Jehovah of hosts our God."

—*Jeremiah 23: 32-36.*

This example from Jeremiah is in prose, but the discourse, or oracle, is sometimes expressed with emotion so powerful that the language rises into the high rhythm of poetry. The translation by The Jewish Publication Society of America recognizes this fact and so translates Isaiah's introductory discourse into stanza units. I quote one of the stanzas:

"Come now, and let us reason together,
Saith the Lord;
Though your sins be as scarlet,
They shall be as white as snow;
Though they be red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.
If ye be willing and obedient,
Ye shall eat the good of the land;
But if ye refuse and rebel,
Ye shall be devoured with the sword;
For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken."

—*Isaiah 1:18-20.*

In prophetic literature there is a device which appears to be the survival of the dirge, a form which, used by

hired or professional mourners, expressed the feelings of bereaved people. This dirge rhythm is in the form of a couplet of unequal length of parts. An example will make this form clear. I take the example from the prophecy of Amos and use the translation of Dr. George A. Smith:[10]

"Hear this word which I lift up against you
—A dirge, O house of Israel:
Fallen, no more shall she rise,
Virgin of Israel!
Flung down on her own ground,
No one to raise her."

—*Amos 5:1, 2.*

Anyone who reads this couplet form aloud will observe that the second line, because it is only two thirds of the length of the first line, is long enough to express the full emotion which puts a lump in the throat of the mourner, and thus chokes off his words. Although this is not the form used in all lamentations, it appears to be the original form and suits well the emotions of earlier peoples.

The prophetic message, in its very nature, required the dirge form; it was therefore in frequent use. Ezekiel calls upon it when he laments over the condition of Tyre, and when he views its impending doom. This dirge is the language of the princes of the sea as they mourn over the departing glory of Tyre and as that sea-girt city sinks into irretrievable ruin. The prophet's own language will best serve us here:

[10] G. A. Smith, "The Twelve Minor Prophets," in "The Expositor's Bible." Published by Doubleday, Doran & Company. Used by permission.

"Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to Tyre: Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded groan, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee? Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay aside their robes, and strip off their bordered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble every moment, and be astonished at thee. And they shall take up a lamentation over thee, and say to thee,

"How is perished from the sea;
The City renowned!
She that laid her terror—
On all its inhabitants!
(Now) are the isles affrighted—
In the day of thy falling!" [11]

—*Ezekiel 26:15-17.*

There is something almost dramatic in the manner in which the prophet writes his reaction to this dirge sung by the isles of the sea:

"Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be dismayed at thy departure."

—*Ezekiel 26:18.*

Most Bible critics speak of elegy as if it were another form of literature. Even Dr. Moulton is of this opinion, though he stoutly maintains that dirge is the foundation of elegy. I think he is correct in saying that dirge is the foundation, but I think he is not correct in making elegy a different form; for the foundation is a part of a building and not a separate structure. The attempts of several critics to multiply

[11] J. Skinner, "Ezekiel," in "The Expositor's Bible," p. 239. Published by Doubleday, Doran & Company. Used by permission.

the vocabulary of technical terms, here as in other places, have resulted in confusion; and this confusion arises because more attention is bestowed on technique than on content. When we think of content it becomes clear that whether we call the poem a dirge or an elegy, the theme is one and the aim one—the expression of grief either for individuals or for nations. It is not possible to classify the poetry of any nation by technique, for even in our present study we find that some lamentations are not written in the couplet of parts of unequal length. Also, at times, we meet Bible poetry which is expressed in the unequal measure, but in content it is anything but elegiac. Elegy must, therefore, be determined largely by content; it must be the poetry of sorrow.

Since we do not desire to multiply names we shall call the rest of the poetry by the simple term, "poems." We turn to the prophecy of Habakkuk:

"Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood,
And establisheth a city by iniquity!
Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts
That the peoples labour for the fire,
And the nations weary themselves for vanity?
For the earth shall be filled
With the knowledge of the glory of the Lord,
As the waters cover the sea." [12]

—*Habakkuk 2:12-14.*

As a further example of poetry found in the Prophets, I cite a poem of strength and beauty:

"I will heal their backsliding,
I will love them freely;

[12] Translation of The Jewish Publication Society of America.

For Mine anger is turned away from him.
I will be as the dew unto Israel;
He shall blossom as the lily,
And cast forth his roots as Lebanon.
His branches shall spread,
And his beauty shall be as the olive-tree,
And his fragrance as Lebanon." [12]

—*Hosea 14: 5-7.*

It remains to speak of a form of literature that is exclusively Biblical: it is a blending, an overlapping, of prose and poetry and much used by the prophets. Because of its frequent use by these writers, Dr. Moulton calls it "the doom form" and so names it because they use it in pronouncing doom upon nations, persons, or places. This name is not in Dr. Moulton's usual happy choice of terms. Indeed, in another part of his book he speaks of this form as being characteristic not of prophetic literature only, but of other parts of the literature of the Bible also. Upon this point he writes:

"This overlapping of verse and prose may then be regarded as the foremost of the characteristics that distinguish Hebrew among the great literatures of the world. As we proceed with our survey of Scripture we shall meet this phenomenon at every step. . . . Other languages may surpass Hebrew as vehicles for precision of thought. But the harmonization of recitative and rhythm, on the common ground of high parallelism, has provided for the Bible the most elastic medium of expression which the world's literatures contain." [13]

This form of literature is not of arbitrary construction, but of vital make, the outcome of the fervor

[13] R. Moulton, "The Literary Study of the Bible," pp. 128, 129.

of the Hebrew mind and heart. The author begins to express himself in prose, but his heart overflows with emotion and the recitative leaps over its limits and becomes lyric. Here in literary form is a type of parallelism not artificially arranged, but made to suit moods of the mind and to express the sense of the soul. This I take to be the genesis of these correlated rhythms of prose and poetry which in Bible literature are so beautifully blended, which lean upon each other for mutual support. Here prose and poetry meet together; here art which says and art which sings have kissed each other; here prose which has rhythm and poetry which is rhythm are divinely blended in a literary instrument of great power and beauty. I ask the reader to study two samples:

The first I take from the prophecy of Isaiah. The first part of the quotation, which speaks of the blessings of restored Israel, is undoubtedly in prose:

"For the Lord will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land; and the stranger shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and for handmaids; and they shall take them captive, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors. And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy travail, and from thy trouble, and from the hard service wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and say:

"How hath the oppressor ceased!
The exactress of gold ceased!

The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked,
The sceptre of the rulers,
That smote the peoples in wrath
With an incessant stroke,
That ruled the nations in anger,
With a persecution that none restrained.
The whole earth is as rest, and is quiet;
They break forth into singing.
Yea, the cypresses rejoice at thee,
And the cedars of Lebanon:
'Since thou art laid down,
No feller is come up against us.' "[14]

—*Isaiah 14:1-8.*

The second example of this kind of literature is taken from the work of Ezekiel, and we give Dr. Moulton's adaptation of it:

"Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and cast them down, even her, and the daughters of the famous nations,

Unto the nether parts of the earth,
With them that go down into the pit.

Whom dost thou pass in beauty? go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised. They shall fall in the midst

Of them that are slain by the sword:
She is delivered to the sword:
Draw her away and all her multitudes.

The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him:

They are gone down,
They lie still,
Even the uncircumcised,
Slain by the sword.

[14] Translation of The Jewish Publication Society of America.

Asshur is there and all her company:
Her graves are round about him:
All of them slain,
Fallen by the sword:
Whose graves are set in the uttermost parts of the pit, and her company is round about her grave:
All of them slain,
Fallen by the sword,
Which caused terror in the land of the living.
There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave:
All of them slain,
Fallen by the sword,
Which are gone down uncircumcised
Into the nether parts of the earth,
which caused their terror in the land of the living, and have borne their shame—
With them that go down to the pit." [15]

—*Ezekiel 32:18-24.*

These two selections, presented only in part, are descriptions of the reception given to Babylon and to Egypt on their arrival in the nether world. Isaiah and Ezekiel need moments of poetic feeling to relieve the monotony of a prose that tries to recite happenings in gloomy Hades. Anyone who will read aloud these passages, and poetry should always be read aloud, will notice the difference in rhythm between that of the prose and that of the poetry.

There is yet another form in this department of literature, to which several writers have given the name rhapsody. For this type I offer the name "prophetic symphony."

[15] R. Moulton, "The Literary Study of the Bible," pp. 400, 401.

In another part of this book I have called the second half of Isaiah's prophecy the song of salvation. It is, indeed, a magnificent song in which many voices blend, even as many instruments of a great orchestra blend in one focal point of harmony. In secular literature, Sidney Lanier's poem, "Symphony," is a notable illustration of the symphonic idea of how musical instruments may speak in a poem, and so speak that there are constant movement and power towards a climax. This is exactly the condition found in the symphony of Zion redeemed.

I am aware, as an earlier part of this chapter intimates, that some recent criticism is not entirely in harmony with what one of them calls Professor Moulton's attempt to treat the latter part of Isaiah as a dramatic unity. I propose, however, to show that the thought music, though its counterpoint may be somewhat difficult, is perfectly harmonious throughout. This is a perfectly permissible proposal since in their beginning music and poetry are one. Pitch in music corresponds to tone color in poetry. Then we shall not contend that the so-called Second Isaiah is the logic of pure reason. Rather shall we attempt to maintain that it is the language of poetry, the language of the soul, the song of salvation.

To these chapters, 40 to 66, we now turn. The song begins in the soft strains that bring comfort to the people of God: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Then follows the mixed melody in which doubt and hope are heard in conflict; but this is of short duration, for the music rises into hopeful, inspiring waves at the thought of the infinite power

of the God who offers the comfort. What musical eloquence is produced by the belief that this God measures the waters "in the hollow of his hand" and heaven "with a span"; weighs the mountains "in scales" and "the hills in a balance"; and stretches out "the heavens as a curtain." Following hard upon this burst of eloquence is the cadence of continued promised comfort in view of deliverance to come. This deliverance will come in the double form of both physical and spiritual emancipation. The great symphonist Isaiah now adds another idea to the music of his thought in this song of salvation; and this idea we may very properly name "The Servant of the Lord."

Many Bible exegetes find numerous difficulties in determining who this Servant was; not a few of these critics think that Isaiah is "off the key"; that his song is marred by discord. The writer of this book is of a very different opinion; for he finds, not by arguing with other critics but by following Isaiah, that the prophet's message is characterized by God's harmonious plan for Israel and through Israel for the world. From this point of view the Servant of the Lord problem becomes amazingly simplified.

The first-named "Servant" is Cyrus, the coming deliverer. He it is who will overthrow Babylon and bring political emancipation. He it is who, anointed by God for a special purpose, will come from the northeast and will tread upon the enemies of Israel as the potter treads the clay, to execute vengeance upon them. There is no discord in introducing a foreigner, a Greek, a Gentile, to bring liberty to a people

who will furnish a Messiah for the world, of whom Isaiah says :

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
—*Isaiah 9: 6.*

This is the prophet's acceptance of the promise that God made to Abraham:

"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."
—*Genesis 12: 3.*

The bringing in of the Gentiles by Cyrus to achieve Hebrew national liberty is but the proper motivation for the presentation of the Servant of the Lord in ch. 53, who is the sacrificial Lamb, the Sin Bearer, the Messiah upon whom the Lord has laid "the iniquity of us all." Surely in this division of Isaiah's thought there is no discord to disturb the music. Indeed, there is there a unique parallelism of which the Hebrew mind was fond. As Cyrus brings civil liberty, the Messiah brings spiritual freedom.

In the last part of this symphony of salvation, Isaiah foretells the great glory of God's Kingdom in its redeemed beauty, and, as Canon Driver remarks, he allows his imagination to wander "over the transformed earth of the Messianic future." In these closing chapters of the song of salvation there are several poems, full of strength and sublimity, which are well adapted to the divine symphony of a ransomed land and a redeemed people. The following is one of these poems, written in Isaiah's dignified style:

"Arise, shine, for thy light is come
And the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.
For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
And gross darkness the peoples;
But upon thee the Lord will arise,
And His glory shall be seen upon thee.
And nations shall walk at thy light,
And kings at the brightness of thy rising." [16]

—*Isaiah 60:1-3.*

We rise from this symphony with a feeling of harmony in our hearts and a sense of satisfaction in our souls. "Music hath charms."

The study of prophetic literature would hardly be complete without a few examples, not of further literary forms, though by some writers so named, but of literary devices, as I choose to call them. One of those devices is the emblem or object taken either from nature or from life and used symbolically. A great sorrow in the life of Ezekiel is used as a text upon which to preach a sermon to the people of Israel. Upon the death of his wife he is neither to mourn nor to weep, and all this to show to his countrymen that they will be called upon to pass through tribulations that will lie beyond the reach of tears. Another example of this device is found in the experience of Jeremiah as he visits the workshop of the potter. During his visit he notices that the workman makes a vessel as it seems "good to the potter to make it." Then the word of the Lord comes to the prophet and bids him say:

"O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith Jehovah. Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel."

—*Jeremiah 18:6.*

[16] Translation of The Jewish Publication Society of America.

Another literary device is vision. In its simplest form it is a revelation, or a view, not attainable by the ordinary, or physical, means of sight. To illustrate this I make use of a part of The Book of Daniel:

"I saw in the night visions,
And, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven
One like unto a son of man,
And he came even to the Ancient of days,
And he was brought near before Him.
And there was given him dominion,
And glory, and a kingdom,
That all the peoples, nations, and languages
Should serve him;
His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,
And his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." [17]

—*Daniel 7: 13, 14.*

Besides these literary devices, there are the usual figures of speech and the usual rhetorical embellishments. I shall avoid giving anything like a complete list for here, as in other matters, enough is as good as a feast; and since this book is an Introduction, a few examples will do.

"He will feed his flock like a shepherd." This simile is natural and beautiful. "But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." This rustic simile has simplicity and dignity.

From the prophecy of Habakkuk, I choose a metaphor:

[17] Translation of The Jewish Publication Society of America.

"Upon my watch-tower I will stand,
And take my post on the rampart.
I will watch to see what He will say to me,
And what answer I get back to my plea." [18]
—*Habakkuk 2:1.*

This condensed simile or metaphor shows the feeling of responsibility entertained by the prophet.

In The Book of Jeremiah we have a fine example of synecdoche: "For I have set my face against this city." (A.V.) This is the use of a part for the whole. The entire being of Jehovah is set against wickedness. In Hosea we find the following example of metonymy: "The threshing-floor and the winepress shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail her." This is an example of presenting to the mind an object not by giving its name but by naming something else easily suggestive of it. The threshing floor suggests the grain on the floor, and the wine press suggests the wine therein.

I have given these examples as illustrations of the manner in which the prophets adorn their writings.

Before leaving this study of the prophets it is deemed advisable to ask the student to read the prophetic writings against the background of the historical narratives as recorded in the books of the Kings. This correlation will let in a flood of light upon the utterances of all the prophets. An example of this type of study and of its necessity is found in the opening statement of Isaiah's prophecy:

[18] G. A. Smith, "The Twelve Minor Prophets," in "The Expositor's Bible," Vol. II, p. 133. Published by Doubleday, Doran & Company. Used by permission.

"The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah."

—*Isaiah 1:1.*

A statement almost similar opens the prophecy of Micah:

"The word of Jehovah that came to Micah the Morashtite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem."

—*Micah 1:1.*

In addition the comparative study of two contemporary prophets in the light of history is fruitful in the field of literary criticism.

The historical background, however, is the thing that matters in shedding light upon the work of the prophets. In relationship to history they may be grouped by historic periods. The first is the Pre-Assyrian. The date which begins this period is 784, or about the time that Hosea began to write; and its closing date is 722, or the time of the beginning of the Assyrian Captivity of Israel, or the Northern Kingdom. The following prophets are of this Pre-Assyrian time: Hosea, Amos, Jonah, Joel, Obadiah, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum.

The next epoch dates from the Assyrian Captivity, 722, to the beginning of the Babylonian Captivity of the Southern Kingdom, or 588. In this period there are three prophets: Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk.

The next period is that of the Babylonian Exile; the dates are 588–536. Daniel and Ezekiel are the

Exilic prophets, and the men who really kept the lamp of Truth trimmed and burning.

The next period is called the Post-Exilic, or Restoration, Epoch. The date of its beginning is 536, the time when Cyrus, having become the master of the Chaldean-Babylonian Empire, issued a proclamation to make it possible for the Jews to rebuild their Temple. The closing date is probably about 420, the time of the Prophet Malachi. Haggai and Zechariah did their work in this Restoration time.

Failure to know the historical background has led some writers to groundless assumptions concerning prophetic sayings and to improper interpretations of them. History and literature must ever accompany each other. If history is a record of a nation's deeds, then literature is the true interpretation of those deeds. The prophets have interpreted the real life of Israel.

CHAPTER V

THE LITERATURE OF WISDOM

The term "wisdom" as it is applied to certain books of the Bible is not used for purposes of abstract reasoning or metaphysical discussion. It is, as seen in its application, concrete in conception. Dr. Driver asserts that it was "applied to the faculty of acute observation, shrewdness in discovery or device, cleverness of invention. . . . The wisdom of Solomon showed itself in the skill with which he elicited the truth in his judgment on the two infants, *I Kings 3:16-28.*"[1] This intimates that the term is closely related to the activities of life. So closely, indeed, is it related that in the wisdom books conduct is stressed. Wisdom is accepted as a creed for life, but the creed is translated into terms of conduct.

In the days of our own Emerson there was a similar experiment in the reduction of idealism to a practical creed. That practical creed was applied to every major relationship of life: to economics, to politics, to religion; thus the Transcendental Movement was made to function in a very practical way. In this practicum of life antiquity and modernity shake hands across the centuries.

In the list of wisdom books to be considered in

[1] S. R. Driver, "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament," p. 392.

this chapter I name The Proverbs and Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament and The Epistle of James in the New Testament. In all of these writings conduct is stressed. Wisdom is accepted as a possession of the human mind and heart but to be of use it must be translated into conduct. "This do," is its motto. "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom."

We shall examine each wisdom book separately, because each has its own special matter, manner, and method.

The book of The Proverbs is undoubtedly a compilation, though many of its sayings were arranged by Solomon. These sayings are called proverbs. The Hebrew term *mashal,* as used in wisdom literature, is a condensed form of expression which embodies a similitude. The single proverb is the best kind of example of this sententious form:

> "A soft answer turneth away wrath;
> But a grievous word stirreth up anger."
> —*Proverbs 15:1.*

In the first member of this short and easily remembered sentence there is the picture of a man mild of manner and gentle of speech, while in the second member there is the picture of a man whose words cause grief and beget anger. This is verily *multum in parvo,* much in little. A single proverb is the foundation of the book, but at times single proverbs are so joined in groups as to make possible even poems.

By following the arrangement or physical organization of the book we find in it a division into parts

which make for unity of thought, totality of appeal. The first part of the book is the work of Solomon, for the opening statement is as follows:

"The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel."

—*Proverbs 1:1.*

Chapter 10:1 repeats the statement:

"The proverbs of Solomon.

"A wise son maketh a glad father;
But a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."

This authorship continues to the end of ch. 24.

The second division begins thus:

"These also are proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out."

—*Proverbs 25:1.*

This statement admits that in making the book of The Proverbs there was participation on the part of the men of Hezekiah. This part reaches to the end of ch. 29.

The third division is comprehended in one chapter, ch. 30. The chapter thus introduces itself:

"The words of Agur the son of Jakeh; the oracle.

"The man saith unto Ithiel, unto Ithiel and Ucal."

—*Proverbs 30:1.*

Chapter 31 is the fourth division of the book; it begins:

"The words of king Lemuel; the oracle which his mother taught him."

—*Proverbs 31:1.*

Many other divisions have been made—some of them, no doubt, prompted by exegesis—but students of literature find it more profitable to take any book at its face value. It is thus that we have followed the book of The Proverbs in its outward form.

In each of these divisions the separate proverb is the basic element, and because this is so it may be necessary to remind the reader that a unit proverb is the very best and most definite kind of parallelism. Since we have treated of this in the chapter (III) on poetry the student is asked to stir up his pure mind by way of remembrance by referring to the chapter indicated.

In the study of this book it is wise to observe that it is a treatise on ethics for the plain man, the man on the street, the man of common sense. For him the book is a comprehensive code for conduct. The first part of the book is a practical conduct program for young men. After the manner of a wise teacher Solomon motivates this program by showing the beauty and the utility of a well-ordered, a wisely ordered, life. Both beauty and utility are poetically expressed in the following verses:

"My son, hear the instruction of thy father,
And forsake not the law of thy mother:
For they shall be a chaplet of grace unto thy head,
And chains about thy neck."

—*Proverbs 1: 8, 9.*

"Honor Jehovah with thy substance,
And with the first-fruits of all thine increase:
So shall thy barns be filled with plenty,
And thy vats shall overflow with new wine."

—*Proverbs 3: 9, 10.*

Having given an idea of the beauty and the utility of wisdom at work, the author offers exact details for the conduct of a young man's life. Among these we choose the following: Do not walk in the path where the wicked walk; avoid the strange woman whose "steps take hold on hell" (A.V.); shun idleness which makes a man's garden grow all over with weeds; avoid plain and mixed intoxicants which bite like a serpent and sting like an adder. Many other details are given: these the student will meet when he reads the book of The Proverbs.

Besides the young man's program for life there are many helpful hints and practical admonitions both for those who are bearing the burden and heat of the day and for those who have about spent their threescore and ten years. There is a unit proverb which shows that the teaching of Proverbs is all-comprehensive in its message:

"Children's children are the crown of old men;
And the glory of children are their fathers."
—*Proverbs 17:6.*

Nor are fathers and mothers overlooked in the book's instruction:

"My son, hear the instruction of thy father,
And forsake not the law of thy mother."
—*Proverbs 1:8.*

For those who train the young, discipline is insisted upon:

"The rod and reproof give wisdom;
But a child left to himself causeth shame to his mother."
—*Proverbs 29:15.*

The manner in which honesty in business is discussed reminds one of a modern city ordinance about weights and measures:

"A false balance is an abomination to Jehovah;
But a just weight is his delight."
—*Proverbs 11:1.*

"Diverse weights, and diverse measures,
Both of them alike are an abomination to Jehovah."
—*Proverbs 20:10.*

"Diverse weights are an abomination to Jehovah;
And a false balance is not good."
—*Proverbs 20: 23.*

The unusual literary feature of this book of Proverbs is the poetic power which binds together so many unit proverbs into what Dr. Moulton calls clusters. For example, the first nine chapters are so cohesive that they make up a very good poem on the theme: Wisdom for Young Men. This is not a veiled thesis, but a sincere and a frank poetic view, though practical, of young life. An exceptionally beautiful part of this poem follows:

Those that love me will I love
And those that early seek shall find
In me, riches, honor, wealth;
Yea, enduring righteousness
My fruit is better than gold
Better than purified gold;
And my income is better,
Far better than chosen silver.

I have made this translation directly from the Hebrew, and while following the text almost literally I have endeavored to give the rhythmic swing of the

original. Besides the long poem of which this translation is a part there are not a few shorter ones, though they are no less significant. Some writers think that these poems are sonnets, but I am a bit skeptical about forcing this name upon them, for the Hebrew writers did not know the kind of form which we call a sonnet. However, it occasionally occurs that several unit sayings group themselves so that they form poetic images. A few of these I now offer to the reader.

Solomon, who always had a keen eye for the moral significance of events, turns to the world of entomology for an illustration. In Proverbs, ch. 6, he makes practical statements concerning the habits of ants, noting their industry by telling us of their main traveled roads, along which they carry the harvest to the granary:

To the ant thou languorous one
  Gaze at the path it treads,
And useful wisdom learn
  Go sluggard, go to the ant
Which though o'erseen by
  Neither prince, master, nor king
Looks to its bread 'neath the summer sun,
  And garners its grain 'neath the harvest moon.

In making this translation I have attempted to bring out the thought of Solomon as he sees the sagacity of these strange and peculiar little harvesters as they very wisely look to the needs of their houses in storing provisions in summer and in harvest against the snows of winter. I have attempted also by the use of repetition, a Hebrew device, to show that the sluggard must learn from the ant the necessity of work.

In another poem of the book of The Proverbs Solo-

mon pictures the result of sloth, the picture being that of the field of the sluggard:

I walked past the field of the sluggard,
  Past the orchard of the thoughtless man
Behold it was covered with thorns
  And lo! nettles veiled its face.
This vineyard had no protection
  All its walls were broken down.
Then I sighed for this picture's lesson
  And wisdom whispered to me:
The sluggard asks for more slumber,
  And sleep, more folding of hands to sleep,
But his poverty steals in as a thief
  And his want as an armed man.

This translation, though somewhat free, is sufficiently near to the Hebrew and sufficiently near to English verse form to convey to the eye and ear of the reader that Solomon thinks in poetry. I have made the translation thus in order to help the English reader to get near to the spirit of Hebrew poetry.

In Proverbs there is a very pretty pastoral poem:

"Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks,
And look well to thy herds:
For riches are not for ever;
And doth the crown endure unto all generations?
The hay is carried, and the tender grass showeth itself,
And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in.
The lambs are for thy clothing,
And the goats are the price of the field;
And there will be goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household,
And maintenance for thy maidens."

—*Proverbs 27: 23-27.*

In this poem diligence is the keynote; and plenty for all the needs of life is guaranteed. The soul of the diligent shall be made fat, but there must be provident harvesting.

There is another kind of activity set forth in poetic form in The Proverbs. This activity produces sadness, sorrow, suffering, and shame:

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions?
Who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause?
Who hath redness of eyes?
They that tarry long at the wine;
They that go to seek out mixed wine.
Look not thou upon the wine when it is red,
When it sparkleth in the cup,
When it goeth down smoothly:
At the last it biteth like a serpent,
And stingeth like an adder.
Thine eyes shall behold strange things,
And thy heart shall utter perverse things.
Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea,
Or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.
They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not hurt;
They have beaten me, and I felt it not:
When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again."
—*Proverbs 23: 29-35.*

This is a didactic ode with a very distinct message and reminds one not a little of a statement of Saint Paul: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

The poem, "A Worthy Woman," which is recorded in Proverbs, ch. 31, is the last one that I shall men-

tion. In outward form it is an acrostic composition, being composed of twenty-two units, each one beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Psalm 119 is another example of this type of technique.

"A woman of valour who can find?
For her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,
And he hath no lack of gain.
She doeth him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
She seeketh wool and flax,
And worketh willingly with her hands.
She is like the merchant-ships;
She bringeth her food from afar.
She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth food to her household,
And a portion to her maidens.
She considereth a field, and buyeth it;
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
She girdeth her loins with strength,
And maketh strong her arms.
She perceiveth that her merchandise is good;
Her lamp goeth not out by night.
She layeth her hands to the distaff,
And her hands hold the spindle.
She stretcheth out her hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household;
For all her household are clothed with scarlet.
She maketh for herself coverlets;
Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sitteth among the elders of the land.
She maketh linen garments and selleth them;
And delivereth girdles unto the merchant.
Strength and dignity are her clothing;
And she laugheth at the time to come.
She opened her mouth with wisdom;

And the law of kindness is on her tongue.
She looketh well to the ways of her household,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up, and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her:
'Many daughters have done valiantly,
But thou excellest them all.'
Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain;
But a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands;
And let her works praise her in the gates."[2]
—*Proverbs 31:10-31.*

This picture of domesticity is at the apex of home-making. This virtuous woman, though she is not a queen in the political sense, yet wears the royal diadem of earth's greatest social unit, the home. It has always been true that there is no place like home. This thought has passed into that much quoted epigrammatic question: What is home without mother? The woman of this poem deserves the true compliment: She was a great woman. It is fitting that this book of Proverbs which teaches idealism as a practical creed should begin with the persuasive voice of wisdom and end with the description of a wise woman.

Ecclesiastes, the second wisdom writing to be discussed, is both historical and canonical; for it was included in the accepted Megilloth, or rolls, of the Jewish canon of Scripture. The name Ecclesiastes is the translation of the Hebrew term Kohéleth, which means preacher. This Hebrew noun, which is feminine, is, we think, to be identified with wisdom as the

[2] Translation of The Jewish Publication Society of America.

preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem, being regarded as her impersonation. This is by no means an unusual device used by poets, and since the book is a poem we may regard our conclusion as in keeping with literary sincerity.

This book of all books must be read in its entirety. A partial reading of it is fatal to the understanding even of the parts read. Some separate parts may be made to teach ideas contrary to law and order; yea, even contrary to the Ten Commandments. Of course no literature is fairly treated if read in snatches, but in the case of Ecclesiastes it is more than a matter of fairness to read the book: it is a matter of superlative necessity to read it throughout. In ages past not a few have quoted parts of it in extenuation of their wrongdoing. A certain person, on leaving an evening company, once said, "We left the gay party to practice Solomon." From this book there must be given no selections. The student must see all the book and read it all, or none. Frequently the following is read in schools and colleges:

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love,

and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace."

—*Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.*

What does this paragraph mean to an adolescent boy in high school or to a young and inexperienced girl in a freshman class in college? Yea, more, what does it, in its magnificent isolation, mean to anyone either in college or out of it?

From this detachment I turn to a study of the theme in Ecclesiastes. In every literary production there is a theme, which is part and parcel of the production. In Ecclesiastes, as in any other literary work, a careful, continuous, and constructive reading unfolds the theme. In this way we have learned that the theme is an adventure into the meaning of life or the *summum bonum* of life. The author wishes to know what it is that is the highest good in life.

In his search for life's best the preacher tells us of his method of work, his manner of approach. We shall follow him in his search. He begins the search by a study of nature in which he finds a fixed order. The sun rises and goes down; ever the wind blows south and north; ever the streams run to the sea, their original home. The earth abides forever, but in comparison human life is in a state of flux; for while one generation is coming another is going. In view of these conditions, is there any good in life?

His first experiment in the search of good is in a simultaneous examination of wisdom and pleasure. In connection with the first part of this joint search he makes a study of man's achievements, of all his works done under the sun. But this, while it gave his head some satisfaction, has furnished none to his

heart. Then he says to his heart, "Come now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure," Ecclesiastes 2:1. How he seeks the pleasure is told us in a list of the pleasures he pursued. Then, having satiated both head and heart, he compares practical wisdom with pleasure and his comparison shows that wisdom excels folly as far as light excels darkness, yet, because the same fate will overtake both, even wisdom is folly.

The second place of search for the chief good is in the marts of business; and here he searches in the belief that labor is a gift of God and that there is nothing better than for a man to rejoice in his labors. But labor springs from man's economic competition with his neighbor; and if a man gather great wealth, what more satisfaction has he than to look upon it with his eyes? Silver cannot satisfy the soul, is the preacher's finding. The highest good in life is not found in economic competition in business. As an objective this is vanity.

Then in continuance of his search he makes an adventure into the golden mean or, in our modern language, investigates the philosophy of "the middle of the road." In doing this he addresses his soul:

"Be not righteous overmuch; neither make thyself overwise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?"

—*Ecclesiastes 7:16, 17.*

In this experiment of philosophical dieting he finds little or nothing of nutriment. Herein is not found the highest good in life. Even this also is vanity.

The preacher then lifts up his eyes to the hills,

turns his thoughts Godward; yet as he gazes steadfastly into the heavens the sky is, at times, dark and lowering and sometimes like brass above his head. Notwithstanding this spirit of sadness he, by the dead reckoning of faith, knows that God has put eternity into his heart. By this faith he arrives at a definite conclusion concerning man's chief end which is to fear God; and he learns, by looking to God, that in this fear is the beginning of true wisdom:

"This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."

—*Ecclesiastes 12:13.*

By faith he sees through material things and declares:

"And the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it."

—*Ecclesiastes 12:7.*

The highest good, then, is found in God.

A study of the literary structure of this book will reveal what many readers and some writers have failed to see, but which is perfectly clear to those who know that Hebrew poetry is based not only on parallelism of technique but upon parallelism of thought. Of course, neither of these without the other is poetry but when they are fortunately united there is poetry. In this book of Ecclesiastes the technique is the key to the thought.

The careful reader of the book is keenly impressed with the frequency of the phrase "under the sun," a phrase that is used in this short book twenty-nine times; its synonyms, "upon the earth" and "under

the heavens," are used four and three times respectively, making thirty-six times in all. This phrase, let it be well noted, is not found elsewhere in the Scriptures. In this book, therefore, it is evident that it has a special mission. Indeed this phrase is the key to the poem. How does the key undo the door?

This unusual phrase, "under the sun," is a way of saying, as in Shakespeare, "this mortal coil"; or as Dowden expresses it, "this mundane sphere"; or as we say it, "on the earth," with its *Zeitgeist* or spirit of the time. Then under the sun or upon the earth is not the place in which to find that greatest good; for the author claims that he has searched everything that earth has to offer, but in vain. Nothing under the sun has escaped him. The list of his adventures is large. In some of the adventures he found nothing but sorrow; in others he found good but not the chief good. This experience was of the earth earthy, and it demanded a parallel line of thinking. Above the sun or where God dwells is that parallel. Solomon looked above the sun, looked into that unseen universe where Deity is enthroned, and there he found God, from whom comes, to mankind, every good and perfect gift. This is the higher parallelism of thought; and in Hebrew literature not only is this thought parallelism demanded, but it is actually found; and he who would be a scholar must accept what he finds to be a truth. This is what he finds in the book of Ecclesiastes: the phrase "under the sun" thirty-six times; and a series of statements which the author uses to show that while the things "under the sun" do not explain life's real values, the parallel thoughts that lie in the invisible, intangible, immaterial uni-

verse are the only food for the soul and do explain life. These thoughts are, to use a parallelism, "above the sun." In agreement with this idea are several statements in the book and these I now quote. The reader will understand that each of these statements deals with some realm not "under the sun":

"I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith. He hath made everything beautiful in its time: also he hath set eternity in their heart, yet so that man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end."

—*Ecclesiastes 3:10, 11.*

"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God hath done it, that men should fear before him."

—*Ecclesiastes 3:14.*

"And the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it."

—*Ecclesiastes 12:7.*

"This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

—*Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14.*

Thus the man with eternity in his heart knows that back of this perfectly ordered world is a God whom, if men wish the highest good in life, they must fear; and to whom their spirits must go when the body returns to the earth as it was. The conclusion of the whole matter is that life without God under the sun

is only "vanity and a striving after wind" while life that recognizes God in all matters of duty is the *summum bonum,* the supreme satisfaction in life. Parallelism of thought requires this conclusion. This book centers satisfaction in belief in God who alone can make happy the human spirit; for under the sun the heart which trusts in silver is not satisfied with silver; while the spirit that turns to God above the sun finds reliable happiness and the highest good.

This parallelism of thought that we believe is found in the book of Ecclesiastes is like other parts of Bible literature. A few examples will suffice:

"Thus saith Jehovah, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: what manner of house will ye build unto me? and what place shall be my rest?"
—Isaiah 66:1.

"For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."
—II Corinthians 4:17, 18.

"Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother."
—Galatians 4:25, 26.

These examples show the trend of Bible thought, whether the expression is in Isaiah, Corinthians, Galatians, or Ecclesiastes; and to a Bible student it is always clear that it is eternal life with God that redeems this life under the sun.

I have called this book a poem, and in doing so I depart from Dr. Moulton's idea; for he divides the book into a series of essays, five in number. Now since an essay is an intellectual exposition of what something is or how something is done, it is difficult to see how Ecclesiastes can in any sense be called an essay or a series of essays. The book is not an explanation, but a rhythmic, synthetic interpretation of the results of an adventure into life; and being such, in the nature of the case, it is poetic in spirit. I, therefore, conclude that the book is a poem. Its beautiful rhythm lends itself to musical uses. The climax of the poem has been set to good music, and it appears amongst our best ecclesiastical anthems in the services of the Christian churches.

This is our conclusion of the whole matter: Ecclesiastes is a poem of high technical beauty and of spiritual value. It is not a piece of gentle cynicism, nor an interpretation of pessimism, but the expression, through parallelism of thought, of a strong and an abiding belief that the *summum bonum* of life is attainable through fearing God and keeping his commandments.

The third wisdom book is in the New Testament—The Epistle of James. There can be no doubt about its practical teaching concerning a wisely ordered life. Like the book of Ecclesiastes it accepts the abstract truth about the spiritual possibilities of life and then it proceeds to a concrete application of truth to life. Creed is translated into conduct, and with the emphasis on conduct. The key to the thought of the book is in the following words:

"Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith."

—*James 2:18.*

James makes this statement not because he does not accept faith, but because he desires his readers to see that faith should result in actions congruous with faith. In short, he is attempting to expose sham religion:

"Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter?"

—*James 3:11.*

These shams appear in various ways. There is, for example, the man who subordinates the majesty of the Lord of Glory to the might of money. Here, too, we meet the man who boasts about his faith though he is totally destitute in suitable works. The author, Saint James, adds to his list the man whose tongue is untamed and, therefore, an evil—who "bridleth not his tongue." Here also we meet the boastful man who is reminded in making his programs of activity for the morrow that he should say, "If the Lord will, we shall . . . do this or that." Scottish people and their descendants say, "D. V.," and they make a liberal use of it. These letters are an abbreviation for the Latin phrase *Deo volente,* "God being willing."

The author also reminds his readers that no one may with truth say, when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God. The positivistic philosopher and the mechanistic psychologist were, in the time of Saint James, not known by these names, but the beliefs of these people were shared by men in the first century

of our era; and men then as now and now as then have sinned when they have followed their own lusts by subordinating their wills to their lusts. To all such the message of the letter is that all whose outward life violates the moral side of Christianity have no Christianity at all; for if the heart be right the conduct will correspond; and that because it is true, always true, that "out of it [the heart] are the issues of life." Conduct always betrays inner belief. This is vastly different from the other expression that conduct reveals creed; for many a man repeats his creed without its ever touching his heart, or without its ever becoming a matter of conduct. This latter is not the view of Saint James; for with him it is not the creed in the head but the power of "pure religion and undefiled" in the heart that matters. The morality for which he contends is the hall mark not of sham but of real religion applied to life.

We have classified this letter as one of the wisdom writings. If similarity of ideas means anything this letter when carefully studied shows a very vital connection with the wisdom literature both of the Hebrew Scriptures and of the Apocrypha. The author of the letter has laid under contribution the best from the past. In Ecclesiasticus there is a passage from which the New Testament writer has borrowed:

"If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee."

—*Ecclesiasticus 1: 26.*

To this thought there is in Saint James's letter an undoubted indebtedness:

"But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

—*James 1:5.*

One more comparison will suffice to show the nature of the indebtedness to Apocryphal literature:

"Be swift to hear; and let thy life be sincere; and with patience give answer."

—*Ecclesiasticus 5:11.*

"But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

—*James 1:19, 20.*

This statement in the letter shows the author's use of what he has borrowed. In the earlier writing the imperative is almost peremptory while in the latter it is a very mild imperative. This difference in mental attitude shows that the borrower did not adhere slavishly to his original but used the borrowed knowledge as nutriment.

In a similar spirit Saint James has made use of Wisdom of Solomon, another Apocryphal writing. I shall quote first from Wisdom and then from his letter:

"What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow, and as a post that hasted by; and as a ship that passeth over the waves of the water, which when it is gone by, the trace thereof cannot be found, neither the pathway of the keel in the waves; or as when a bird hath flown through the air, there is no token of her way to be found, but the light air being beaten with the stroke

of her wings, and parted with the violent noise and motion of them, is passed through, and therein afterwards no sign where she went is to be found; or like as when an arrow is shot at a mark, it parteth the air, which immediately cometh together again, so that a man cannot know where it went through: even so we in like manner, as soon as we were born, began to draw to our end, and had no sign of virtue to shew; but were consumed in our own wickedness. For the hope of the ungodly is like dust that is blown away with the wind; like a thin froth that is driven away with the storm; like as the smoke which is dispersed here and there with a tempest, and passeth away as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but a day."

—*Wisdom of Solomon 5: 8-14.*

"Come now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that."

—*James 4:13-15.*

This New Testament writer owes something to Proverbs:

"In the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression;
But he that refraineth his lips doeth wisely."

—*Proverbs 10:19.*

"He that is soon angry will deal foolishly;
And a man of wicked devices is hated."

—*Proverbs 14:17.*

The voice of these proverbs is heard in Saint James's letter:

"Ye know this, my beloved brethren. But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

—*James 1:19, 20.*

This is antiquity's voice softened with the phrase, "my beloved brethren."

The author of the letter also borrows from the book of Ecclesiastes:

"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."

—*Ecclesiastes 5:2.*

The spirit of this quotation runs through the entire letter. It is his own practical, fervid, and emotional nature that he stamps upon all his borrowings. This thought suggests a consideration of his style of writing.

His style is conditioned by the kind of literature he writes. His work is in the form of a letter, which is a personal and a direct communication from one person to another or to several persons. In the case of the letter we are considering, it is a direct personal message to the twelve tribes who are of the Dispersion. The writing is frankly familiar; and there is in it none of the objectivity of an epic, none of the formality and magnitude of the drama, none of the controversial character of the essay; there is only the freshness and simplicity of one who in a personal message unburdens his heart to others. He wrote this letter in Greek in a style simple, clear, and strong. In part its simplicity consists in the fact that its vocabu-

lary is good Greek exactly used; it is simple, too, because there is no ambiguity. It is pure Greek because of the absence of the contemporary vernacular. It is strong because such words and such arrangements of words are made as to express the intensity of feeling of this great bishop of Jerusalem. Here is an example of his intense heart as it overflows through what in style is sometimes called repetition, or reiteration, of words *(duodiplosis)*.

The English translation follows: and it shows how the Greek word is used:

"Knowing that the proving of your faith worketh patience. And let patience have its perfect work."
—James 1: 3, 4.

In this verse there is one repetition very effectively used in that it adds intensity to the style. The English author, master critic and master of prose style, Matthew Arnold, uses this device regularly; and not only uses it but strongly recommends its use by others.

In the further study of his style we remark that there are several paragraphs which deal with the bishop's thought. The presence of these paragraphs has led some, incorrectly I think, to speak of these phases of thought as essays. Now Saint James knew of nothing corresponding to our modern classifications of literature, but he did have knowledge of the laws of thought. These laws he followed and hence we have a series of thought developments. In one of these, for example, he denounces foolish and unwarranted talking. This is the thought unit:

"Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman willeth. So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire! And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God: out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing."

—James 3:4-10.

This letter of Saint James is very short, but from what we have said about it, and from what the student will get by the careful reading of it, he will see that it contains good literature in letter form and will become acquainted with its unique author, the bishop of Jerusalem and the brother of Jesus.

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom."

CHAPTER VI

THE IDYL

The kind of literature in The Book of Ruth is, doubtless, more important than the name which, retroactively, we apply to it. Names, however, are necessary. Hence we call the book an idyl. We think that this name is more nearly correct than any other; for the book is not, as some have supposed, a short story. Neither is it historical in purpose; for though the Bible of the Reformation places it among the historical books it is not so placed in the Hebrew canon. In the latter it is one of the five rolls and is included with Job, Psalms, and Proverbs. It is evident, therefore, that the Jews did not consider it merely narrative; and I think they were correct; for the book is a picture of real human life, a delicious picture of love in its simplicity situate in what the Roman poet calls "the unspoiled country."

In this delightful idyl are portrayed many experiences of human life, particularly that of love, which comes out uncommonly strong. The "tight" times in Bethlehem-Judah; the migration to a strange land; the marriage of two young immigrants to maidens of Moab; the sorrow experienced in the new country; the resolve of the matron of Bethlehem to return to her own country, whence famine had driven her, but to which deaths in the family drove her back again as

a childless widow; the emigration to Bethlehem of Ruth, the Moabitess, and the things that befell her in the land of her choice, are settings for the picture of the unquenchable love of one woman for another woman.

In this beautiful picture of lowly life there is not, even in the background, any royal palace, nothing to make a queen of Sheba wonder and admire; but there are fields of ripe, rich, golden grain; there are reapers; and there are those also who are gleaners, all of them the aristocracy of the fields. Here is a picture similar to that word painting of the psalmist:

"Thou crownest the year with thy goodness;
And thy paths drop fatness.
They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness;
And the hills are girded with joy.
The pastures are clothed with flocks;
The valleys also are covered over with grain;
They shout for joy, they also sing."

—*Psalm 65:11-13.*

Into such a jubilant scene as this entered Ruth, the Moabitess, as a gleaner in the harvest field of Boaz who was a relative of Naomi, now once more at home. It was of this scene that the poet Keats was thinking when in his "Ode to a Nightingale" he made this apposite observation:

"Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn."

Even painters have been fascinated with this piece of literature. Breton's picture of this sincere young woman is exquisite; for one can see her standing in the harvest field modestly meditating upon her new

surroundings, thinking upon her new-found life, treasuring love in her heart and revealing love light in her eyes—not gospel light, but just the light of her soul sent out to Boaz in a sidelong glance, the usual kind found in a maiden's eyes but nowhere else on sea or land.

The plot of this book is simple and yet sweetly sublime. Here it is: In the days when the Judges ruled there was in Bethlehem-Judah a family of four: Elimelech; his wife, Naomi; and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. These, because of hard times at home, went to Moab, an alien country, to seek their fortune. Here in a strange land Elimelech died; here the two sons took wives of the women of Moab, Orpah and Ruth. Within ten years Mahlon and Chilion died; and thus Naomi, without husband and without children, was a woman of a sorrowful spirit, and in a country not her own. She was lonely, but much more she was burdened with homesickness. Thus Naomi with hopes blighted and with prospects dimmed made up her mind to go "away back home"; and so decided to say good-by to her daughters-in-law, also childless widows. Orpah, a matter-of-fact girl, greatly interested in her chance for a second marriage, lifted up her voice and wept, kissed her mother-in-law, returned to her own people, and is never heard of again. Ruth, the idealist, clave to her mother-in-law, and like all idealists she is affectionately remembered by posterity, and so has become immortal. Her plea to Naomi is an example of that pure love that knits the soul of one person to that of another.

The leave-taking ended and the scene changed,

Naomi is again in her native land, the land that she loves best. Here friends meet and greet her and their greeting is as graphic as it is gracious. "Is this Naomi?" That was their way of saying what we mean joyously to imply when we say: "Look who's here!" In this new scene in Bethlehem the idyllic picture shows new people and talks of new contacts. The night of sorrow is over and gone; the winter of Naomi's discontent is past; the time of the singing of birds has come again and for her once more the voice of the turtle is heard in the environs of Bethlehem. The childless widow is transformed into the inimitable matchmaker of the ages; for she arranged the most significantly strategic wedding recorded in Bible literature. For the truth of this statement study Ruth's posterity. From her descended King David and King David's greater son, Jesus of Nazareth.

To say that Naomi was a great matchmaker is not a jingle of words; for Boaz could not have known all that he did know were it not for the fact that some one had told him about Ruth. Indeed some one, and that a woman, had told him; and manlike, in a crisis, he gave away the secret. For in speaking of Ruth the author says:

"Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found favor in thy sight, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a foreigner?"

—*Ruth 2:10.*

And then Boaz revealed the secret, for the author says:

"And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been showed me, all that thou hast done unto

thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people that thou knewest not heretofore."

—*Ruth 2:11.*

Who told all this to Boaz? Why, of course, Naomi told him. That good broad-minded mother-in-law said to Ruth: "Now sit still, my child, and be quiet while I tell you about the man I have picked out for you. His name is Boaz and he has a nice farm. You will marry very well."

How could Ruth be quiet when Naomi's own heart was fluttering like a frightened bird? Preparations for weddings have always stimulated and accelerated the female heart; for the life of a woman is truly cardiocentric.

The courtship of Boaz and Ruth was in its procedure somewhat different from those of our day, but not a whit less honorable. The first real intimation of the love of the man Boaz for the charming young widow is seen in the instructions which he gave to his reapers. These instructions carry a lot of "freight" of the heart:

"And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not. And also pull out some for her from the bundles, and leave it, and let her glean, and rebuke her not."

—*Ruth 2:15, 16.*

This was his bouquet of roses or his pound of sweets to the sweetest damsel he knew. Ruth, a true daughter of Eve, sensed the meaning of this gift, reflected upon it, learned from it what manner of man had

given it; then with womanly sincerity she yielded her heart to Boaz, the owner of the fields in which she was a gleaner. At eventide she returned to Naomi, who with a knowing look said: "Ruth, now tell me truly, where did you glean to-day?" Did Naomi need to ask this question?

The remainder of the book completes the courtship story and gives a brief account of the wedding.

Goethe, for whose critical acumen it is not necessary to offer an apology, characterizes The Book of Ruth as "the liveliest little idyl that tradition has transmitted to us." No doubt the life and spirit of this idyl consist in two considerations; viz., the charming naturalness of the setting, and the simple and gracious naturalness of Ruth, who is realistic though romantic. Indeed the potent presence of Ruth, the natural romancer, makes the whole book like a wedding where all are interested in the bride. Ruth was an unusual bride; for she gave up father, mother, friends, native land, and religion for the love she bore to Naomi. Truly she gave all for love and she gained all. Her name and fame stand high among the great women of the world. She was a great woman, though she lived a pastoral life in rural retreats. This may, in a measure, account for the deep and sincere humanity which has kept her memory green.

It is my pleasure in this connection to quote what Wordsworth has said in defense of his having chosen the commonest objects and obscurest people as fit subjects for poetic expression. Of the poems composed to illustrate his idea he says:

"The principal object, then, proposed in these poems was to choose incidents and situations from

common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of the imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and further and above all to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature; chiefly as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and consequently may be more accurately contemplated and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and lastly because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature.'' [1]

There is much, I am convinced, to be said in favor of Wordsworth's philosophy concerning rural life; for it is there that men see the beauty of God's mind: it is there that they are forced to say with Cowper, ''God made the country.'' [2]

In the country around old Bethlehem, on the return of Naomi accompanied by her charming daughter-in-law, the fields were standing thick with corn; they were white already to the harvest. To those farmers of long ago the harvest spoke of God. Boaz was rejoicing in these tokens of the divine favor for he was reaping golden grain; and he was reaping it when Ruth appeared in the field as a humble gleaner. The

[1] Wordsworth, Preface to ''Lyrical Ballads.''
[2] Cowper, ''The Task.''

place and the person are alike in beauty and charm. Indeed nowhere did Ruth look so charming as when standing amid the corn; and nowhere is Boaz more of an honorable man than when directing the harvesters. Country life in its simplicity is ennobling. Ruth and Boaz were noble people, and made more noble by their associations with God's country. In support of this thought there is an appropriate idea in Washington Irving:

"The stranger who would form a correct opinion of the English character, must not confine his observations to the metropolis. He must go forth into the country; he must sojourn in villages and hamlets; he must visit castles, villas, farmhouses, cottages; he must wander through parks and gardens, along hedges and green lanes; he must loiter about country churches; attend wakes and fairs, and other rural festivals; and cope with the people in all their conditions; and all their habits and humors."[3]

Likewise it is "far from the madding crowd"[4] that stories of undying love are written. Artificial stimuli are lacking; the circuitous path in the woodland, the lane by the hedgerow are present with their perennial messages of comfort; for nature always is a cure for care. Nature at work and at ease is always fresh and fascinating. This is always true to those who love what God made. The story of Ruth would not be half so full of interest had the scene been the sidewalks of Jerusalem. The scene at Bethlehem in the cornfields of Boaz has only one benediction: "*Pax vobiscum.*"

[3] Washington Irving, "Rural Life in England."
[4] Title of novel by Thomas Hardy.

CHAPTER VII

THE DRAMA

For the division of literature into types there is no word that I am more loath to use in classifying Bible literature than the term drama; for in its present connotation it is impossible to apply it to any part of the literature of the Bible. If, however, we may be allowed the privilege of applying the term to those books which embody the dramatic instinct in a dramatic form or whose dominant note sounds forth man's innate love for saying things that accommodate themselves to acting it seems that with great appropriateness we can say that the books of Esther and Job are dramatic. Of course, all Bible literature may be put into the form of drama; indeed, it has been done. The various cycles of miracle plays given in England for approximately two hundred years are infallible proofs of this dramatic treatment.

Our claim, however, for the books of Esther and Job is not that their material may be worked over into dramatic shape as in the miracle plays but that they are in, of, and for themselves dramatic. Here I am departing from the view of Dr. Gardner, of Harvard University, who says in his book, "The Bible as English Literature":

"From the time of the Greeks down representative art is the largest and most important part of pure

literature. All the drama, all story-writing, and all poetry except lyrical are representative, in that their effort is to set forth the actions and feelings of persons whom their writers know only indirectly and by force of the creative imagination. In the Bible there is no such literature."[1]

With the view of Dr. Richard Moulton, however, I am somewhat in agreement; for in his book, "The Literary Study of the Bible," he says:

"Hebrew literature has not developed a separate and distinct drama; although, as if to compensate for this, the dramatic impulse is found in Hebrew to invade other regions of literature, including such departments as might have seemed impervious to it. The current finding no channel has spread and diffused itself. The reader of the Bible knows that he will find in it no acted play like the plays of Shakespeare. But on the other hand he will find lyric poems specially dramatic in tone, and in Solomon's Song a lyric idyl that impresses some of its readers as a complete drama. He will find, again, philosophy taking a dramatic shape. In The Book of Job the dramatic form reaches an intensity not exceeded in any literature; yet even here there is no independent drama, but the dramatized discussion is made to rest on a basis of epic story. What is still more surprising, the discourses of prophecy are found to be leavened by the dramatic spirit, and that most concentrated form of Hebrew prophecy which will in this work be called the rhapsody is preëminent in the closeness with which it approaches to drama. If such things could be made the subject of measurement, it would be safe to predict that the *mass* of dramatic material in Bib-

[1] J. H. Gardner, "The Bible as English Literature," pp. 133, 134.

lical literature would be not less than that found in other literatures where drama is a distinct form."[2]

A too strong apperception may tempt one to read back into Bible literature what is not there. The best way, perchance, to avoid yielding to this temptation is to examine historically what The Book of Esther meant to the people to whom it first came, or what The Book of Job contributed concerning the problem of suffering to the people of the age of the man of Uz.

A well-known clergyman of a generation ago, Rev. James M. Whiton, Ph.D., of Brooklyn, New York, remarks:

"The Book of Esther is in form a history, in substance a drama, quite compliant, too, with the Horatian canon, that a drama should consist of five acts, no more, no less."[3]

He could easily have said of it that Esther is an historical play. What is more, the structure of this play lends itself to the division into the number of acts which Horace, in his "*Ars Poetica,*" demands.

Dr. Whiton's logical division follows:

Act I

Esther's Elevation to the Throne
(Chs. 1; 2.)

Act II

Haman's Plot and Esther's Trouble
(Chs. 3; 4.)

[2] R. Moulton, "The Literary Study of the Bible," pp. 108, 109.

[3] J. M. Whiton, "Ruth and Esther," p. 68.

Act III

Esther's Courage and Haman's Fall
(Chs. 5 to 7.)

Act IV

Esther's Undoing of Haman's Plot
and
Mordecai's Elevation to Haman's Place
(Ch. 8.)

Act V

Esther's Deliverance of Her People
and the
Institution of Its Commemoration
(Ch. 9.)

Epilogue
The Glory of Ahasuerus
and the
Greatness of Mordecai
(Ch. 10.)

From a study of this outline it is evident that Dr. Whiton considers this book to be fundamentally dramatic in structure. With this idea I am in agreement; for I consider the book dramatic in both form and content. The dramatic form is too evident to be overlooked. The content, when it is read with open mind, will, I think, prove to be instinct with a high degree of dramatic life and dramatic appeal. Let the book tell its own story:

It came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, the Persian monarch, who ruled one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, that in the third year of his reign he made a feast to a thousand of his lords. Vashti, his queen, at the same time made a feast for the women

in the palace. All was as merry as wedding bells until the seventh day, when, the heart of the king being merry with wine, he ordered certain of his attendants to bring the queen before him so that he might show them her beauty. The queen refused to come. This refusal made the king wroth, and made petulant the princes who were afraid that their wives, too, should become independent. They, therefore, requested that the queen lose her crown; and that a new queen be chosen. This thing was pleasing to the king; and from the virgins who were brought before him he chose Esther, the adopted daughter of Mordecai, a captive Jew, and set the royal crown upon her head, thus making her his queen. In those days two of the king's servants plotted against his life; and the plot was known to Mordecai, who told it to Esther, who in turn revealed it to the king. The king, on learning of the plot, had both the culprits hanged on a tree; and later he rewarded the Jew for having saved his life.

Meanwhile Haman, one of the princes, was made chief of them all; and to him all the king's servants made obeisance as they passed; but Mordecai did not bow down before him and did not reverence him. Haman, on learning that Mordecai was a Jew, asked the king that all Jews in the realm be put to death; and this was his reason, that he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone. Therefore he said to the king: "There are dispersed among the province people who do not obey the king's laws. Let it, therefore, be written that they be destroyed and I will pay ten thousand talents unto the king's treasury." Then the king took his ring and placed it upon the finger of Haman and said: "Herewith I give these people

unto thine hand to do with them as seemeth good to thee." In accordance with this bestowment Haman, in the name of the king, sent letters to all the provinces authorizing the death of all Jews, "both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month," Esther 3:13. Having sent, posthaste, these letters, "the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city of Shushan was perplexed," Esther 3:15.

When Mordecai, the adoptive father of Esther, learned of these things, he put on sackcloth and ashes, and rent his garments. This demonstration was reported, by her maidens, to Esther who, upon the advice of Mordecai, arranged to become the saviour of her people. Realizing that she had come to the kingdom for such a time as this, she put on her royal apparel and entered the throne room where she found favor in the sight of the king who, in token of this favor, held out to her the royal scepter that was in his hand. Then said the king, "What wilt thou, queen Esther?" The queen promptly replied, "I have prepared a banquet to which I invite both your majesty and Haman." They came, and at the banquet the king renewed his question concerning Esther's wish. The queen, true daughter of Eve, said: "I shall prepare another banquet for to-morrow. Will your majesty and Haman do me the honor to be my special guests?"

After the first banquet Haman went forth glad, but on seeing that Mordecai would not bow to him he was exceeding wroth; but he restrained himself and, going home, told his wife all about the banquet that had been and spoke with pleasure about the banquet to be.

"Yet," he added, "all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." Then his wife, like Lady Jezebel who preceded her and Lady Macbeth who came later, said, "I have a plan; he is in your way; hang him." This pleased Haman.

That night the king could not sleep. He called for state documents, which were read before him. From these chronicles the king learned that it was Mordecai who had laid bare the plot and saved the king's life. That night the king decided to honor the man who had saved his life. On the morrow he called Haman, who was standing in the court awaiting his chance to tell the king about the preparations that had been made for Mordecai's execution. Haman came in to speak to the king but Ahasuerus spoke first, and this is what he said: "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor?" Esther 6:6. Haman thought the honor was for him and he promptly answered, "Give him royal honors." "All right," said the king, "I commission you to place the royal insignia upon Mordecai." Haman obeyed, but great sorrow fell upon him; and he grieved so exceedingly that not even his wife could comfort him. He refused to be comforted.

But here is the second banquet: it is now that Esther pleads for her people and against her enemy who, the king learns, is Haman, whom he had trusted. The king kept his promise to Esther that he would give her anything even to the half of his kingdom. He stepped out for a moment into the palace garden, and on his return found Haman in a compromising position. This aggravated the king's anger and at the

word that went forth from his mouth, his attendants covered Haman's face, led him out, and hanged him on the gallows which he had erected for Mordecai. "Then was the king's wrath pacified," Esther 7:10.

Almost in Solomonic fashion the king decided an ugly issue. He knew that he must keep the law, but by letters, posthaste, to the Jews scattered through the provinces he gave them the right of self-defense, a new law which resulted in their favor.

This dramatic happening is even to-day kept in memory by the feast of purim or lots. The feast of purim is so called because Haman and the enemies of the Jews had cast lots for their destruction.

The introduction to this piece of dramatic literature is the picture of a feast of Ahasuerus, who, in the midst of the colorful court of the garden of the king's palace, ate, drank, and was merry. In this court there "were hangings of white cloth, of green, and of blue, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the couches were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and white, and yellow, and black marble," Esther 1:6. Drinking vessels of gold added to this regal splendor.

The rising force of the drama begins when Vashti, the queen, refuses to obey the invitation of the king to display her beauty before him and his drunken lords and in the presence of the people.

Immediately following this rising force there is the exciting force, in which are set forth the divorce and humiliation of Vashti and the elevation of Esther to wear the diadem of Persia, together with Haman's plot to destroy all the Jews in Persia. The exciting

force is intensified by Haman's securing the royal decree for the execution of his nefarious purpose, his murderous design.

The climax is reached when Mordecai, the adoptive father of the queen, reveals to her the plot against all the Jews. He gives her a copy of the decree that she may know its full purpose; and, having received it from Mordecai's messenger, she begins to make plans for the salvation of the Jews in Persia.

Having passed the climax we now arrive at the first step in the return scenes. Esther, having proclaimed a fast lasting three days and three nights, goes into the presence of the king determined to make a plea for the Jews even if in making the request she should perish. This, in the drama, is an exciting and a tragic moment; for if the king does not hold out the royal scepter the petitioner must die. This day his majesty is in good humor and so he holds out the golden scepter and says to his queen, "What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be given thee even to the half of the kingdom," Esther 5:3. The queen diplomatically replies, "If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him," Esther 5:4. The king hearkens and hears and summons Haman to accompany him to the banquet; and to the banquet they come. Here the king renews his question: "And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed," Esther 5:6. Quietly the queen announces another banquet at which she promises to make her request

known. To this banquet also Haman is invited. Of course he is flattered and he rejoices, but his rejoicing is retarded by the fact that the hateful Mordecai still lives. As in many other instances in life he consults with his wife as to how he may get rid of his enemy. She suggests that he be hanged. But, and this is a very dramatic adversative conjunction, during the night between the banquets the king cannot sleep; and to quiet himself he has some one read to him a few recent chronicles of the kingdom, among others an account of the plot against his life. This account arouses his memory and stirs his conscience; for it reminds him that Mordecai, the discoverer of the plot, has never received the royal thanks he deserves.

In the solution of this dramatic problem the next return scene is superbly appealing. Haman who, at the suggestion of his wife and friends, has erected a gallows upon which to hang Mordecai, is "usurping" the keen morning air and waiting for a chance to say to Ahasuerus, "Hang Mordecai on the gallows I have prepared for him." The waiting Haman knows nothing of the king's insomnia; nothing of the reading of the chronicle; and nothing of the king's plan to reward Mordecai. This is a case in which blissful ignorance gave temporary mental comfort. But once again the scene is changed: it is not so superb as it is startling. To it we turn.

To the king's question, "Who is in the court?" the servants reply, "Behold, Haman standeth in the court." And the king says, "Let him come in." The scene is impressive; for Haman has now come in and

stands in the presence of the king. It is a tense moment:

"So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor? Now Haman said in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honor more than to myself? And Haman said unto the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honor, let royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and on the head of which a crown royal is set: and let the apparel and the horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man therewith whom the king delighteth to honor, and cause him to ride on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor."

—*Esther 6: 6-9.*

Now comes what Haman feels to be "the most unkindest cut of all":

"Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and caused him to ride through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor."

—*Esther 6:10, 11.*

This honor for the haughty Jew is too heavy a burden for Haman, so he covers his face and hastens home to tell his wife about his humiliation. No sooner has he reached home than the king's chamberlains

come to bring him to the banquet for him and for the king. The next scene is that of the second banquet.

To this banquet come Haman and the king, Haman's excellent spirits doubtless due to the fact that he did not know either of Esther's race or of her relationship to Mordecai. The king remembers that this is the day and this the occasion when Esther is to make her request. He therefore says, "What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed," Esther 7:2. Then says the queen, "We are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish," Esther 7:4. Then very shrewdly she mentions "the adversary." The sound of that word arouses Ahasuerus, who says to the queen, "Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?" Esther 7:5. And Esther says with deep passion, "An adversary and an enemy, even this wicked Haman," Esther 7:6. No greater blow could have fallen upon Haman than this. The action is sharp, sure, and decisive; for soon after the queen's charge against Haman, at the royal command, he with covered face is led out and hanged upon the lofty gallows which he had erected for the execution of the aggressive Mordecai. Thus jealousy's debt is paid.

The next great dramatic step concerns itself with how an irreversible law may be made inoperative so far as it concerns the proscribed Jews. To wait for an answer in this dilemma is a fine piece of dramatic suspense. With his beautiful queen pleading for her people, the king, like a Solomon come to judgment,

issues another decree which grants the people the right of self-defense. This gladdens the hearts of the Jews scattered abroad throughout the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces; and it lifts the suspense. Thus this tide in their affairs taken at the flood rolls on to fortune; for the Jews smite their enemies with the sword so that there is a sore slaughter.

The last act in this drama is grave, severe, and revengeful. Ahasuerus has promised Esther anything that she shall ask even to the half of the kingdom, and to his request as to what further she desires she replies, "Let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows," Esther 9:13. The request is granted. Besides the death of these ten sons of Haman, the Jews in Shushan put to death three hundred men of the Persians at Shushan while the other Jews of the provinces slay seventy-five thousand of their enemies. This is surely severely tragic. The dénouement is bathed in rivers of human blood. This piece of dramatic literature has a very well executed epilogue which exalts the Persian monarch and correspondingly glorifies Mordecai, who succeeds Haman as the man next to the king.

The ethic of this piece of literature has come in for much discussion. One critic thinks that the slaughter of so many thousands of Persians is a matter that provokes a feeling of disgust. From the point of view of Jesus, who prayed for his enemies, it is impossible to assent to the sad conclusion of The Book of Esther. It seems, however, that the ethical idea in the Old Testament Scriptures considered all human relationships from the point of view of the

social good, especially the good of those people who believed that they were the real recipients of God's grace and the conservators of real religion.

W. S. Bruce, in "The Ethics of the Old Testament,"[4] speaks to this difficult moral question:

"It is to be observed that this conception of the highest good in Israel is never that of an *individual* good. The modern theory of individualism, which has been one of the ruling ideas of the day, had not taken possession of the Hebrew mind. The truth of a personal immortality had not yet been brought to light. Rather that conception of collectivism, which appears to be rising on the political horizon of to-day, dominates the Old Testament. Morality is based, not upon the individual conscience, but upon the collective conscience of the nation. It is the people of Israel, and not the individual Israelite, that the prophets know as Jehovah's elect one. The servant in Isaiah to whom the blessings are promised is the nation of Israel. The Messianic thought that is embedded in this phrase is constantly expanding throughout the Old Testament; and it tends to keep the interests of the individual out of sight. The hope of the saints was for a great national Deliverer rather than for a personal Redeemer. Even when in the Psalms we hear the cry of some lonely penitent heart after purity, along with it the voice of righteous indignation against God's enemies is also heard, speaking rather in national than in individual tones. Indeed, it is impossible to explain the intense yearning for vengeance on the foes of Israel, found in the Psalms, except on the ground that the writers feel they are but voicing a national sentiment."

The thought expressed in this passage clearly shows the intense nationalism of The Book of Esther; and I suspect that it is so national as to leave very little

[4] Pages 22, 23.

room for internationalism. Self-centered nationalism is a limitation in literature. Yet in spite of this limitation; in spite of its far remove from the spirit of the New Testament and from the spirit of the message of Jesus; in spite of its being below the rest of the Old Testament in religious ideas; in spite of its somewhat heathen atmosphere; in spite of the fact that the name of God is neither mentioned nor even suggested in any part of the book, it is nevertheless, from the point of view of literature, very strong in its dramatic appeal.

Dr. Whiton, of New York, from whom I have quoted in this chapter, has an appropriate paragraph in which, speaking of this book, he says:

"Here are regal splendor, despotic power, sensual passion, intriguing servility, murderous revenge. And here on this dark and stormy sea is a young woman, gifted with beauty, discretion, courage, who masters these menacing elements and becomes the saviour of her people. Her dramatic story is full of the strange turns that fancy delights in, from the distaff to the throne, from the banquet to the gibbet; full also of the singular chances, so-called, in which the most trivial things, as in a hair balance, determine destiny. These give it the zest of a thrilling novel. Yet truth is often stranger than fiction, as in the story of that illegitimate child of a Livonian peasant girl, who became Catherine I of Russia."[5]

There are, I think, two other matters in which this book is dramatically barren. The first is the speedy dismissal of Vashti, the rightful queen of Persia. On her refusal to exhibit her beauty for the delectation of sensual and drunken men she is pushed

[5] J. M. Whiton, "Ruth and Esther," p. 67.

out of the picture as if she were a bloodless shadow. Vashti is given neither poetic nor dramatic justice; and here the play halts. The other weakness in the drama is that it appears too much like a veiled thesis for the purpose of showing the superiority of one people over another. None of the other great dramas of the world exhibit this spirit. Hamlet must be more than Hamlet of Denmark, and Shakespeare has made him more; but Esther is a Hebrew of the Hebrews and nothing more, and the author has made her nothing more. Great literature eliminates the adjective and makes its characters human beings, at least more human than racial. Because this is not done in Esther the book is less than great.

The more one studies The Book of Job the more he is constrained to wonder at the depth of its thought. I cannot, however, agree with a certain secular writer whom Dr. James Stalker quotes thus:

"It will one day perhaps, when it is allowed to stand on its own merit, be seen towering up alone, far away above all the poetry of the world."[6]

This is perhaps too sweeping, but it is a statement that challenges thought; for the statement is concerning a very old book, a book that speaks out of the far distant patriarchal age of the Hebrew people. In view of this fact the wonder is that a book so old has suffered not a whit by the lapse of centuries, nor by the exacting test of time; and it remains to this day a great philosophical dramatic poem.

In our treatment of The Book of Job we have found in it nothing to indicate that the author in-

[6] J. Stalker, "The Beauty of the Bible. A Study of Its Poets and Poetry," p. 154.

tended it to be acted. On the contrary it is more lyrical than epical, more subjective than objective, more given to the expression of personal feeling than to an interpretation of the feelings of others. Yet Job has so universalized the problem of pain that the book concerns all humanity in its manifold experiences. Because of this universality the reader sees himself in the experiences of the book's hero, who is a man of like passions with other human beings. These passions, when seen in fierce conflict, become filled with dramatic appeal; and they are seen in conflict in this piece of literature.

This appeal demands that we listen to it, but how shall we listen? Shall we listen as individual readers, or shall we ask that it be acted? If we insist upon all the requirements of modern drama the book should remain in the hands of individual readers, but if we admit that intense thought expressed chiefly through dialogue may be a means of dramatic representation then The Book of Job may be "staged." Indeed it has been successfully dramatized.

Perhaps the best way to know the book in its dramatic appeal is first of all to tell its story. The story is a basic part of all drama; and for that reason we tell it. In the land of Uz, or Idumæa, there lived an Arabian prince who was both pious and prosperous, for he had great possessions and he was so religious that when his children had finished feasting at one another's houses Job sanctified them lest perchance they had offended God.

Into all this prosperity and happiness enters Satan to accuse Job. He even enters the council chamber of heaven to say that Job's religion is not disinter-

ested; that he is serving God for what he can, to his advantage, get out of that service. Jehovah then gives Satan permission to disturb Job's prosperity and even to afflict Job bodily. Consequently his property is destroyed; his children die; and he is afflicted with a grievous and loathsome disease. He is in a sad state. The story of his losses and troubles travels to other countries and brings from afar three men of note who come to be his comforters. When these men see Job's pitiful plight and witness his distress of mind and his great bodily suffering, the fountain of their speech is sealed and they sit in silence for seven days and as many nights. This is the soliloquy of friendly silence.

After this in a stream of vehement language, full of the bitterest execration, Job curses the day of his birth:

"Let the day perish wherein I was born,
And the night which said, There is a man-child
conceived.
Let that day be darkness;
Let not God from above seek for it,
Neither let the light shine upon it.
Let darkness and the shadow of death claim it for
their own;
Let a cloud dwell upon it;
Let all that maketh black the day terrify it.
As for that night, let thick darkness seize upon it:
Let it not rejoice among the days of the year;
Let it not come into the number of the months.
Lo, let that night be barren;
Let no joyful voice come therein.
Let them curse it that curse the day,
Who are ready to rouse up leviathan.
Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark:

Let it look for light, but have none;
Neither let it behold the eyelids of the morning:
Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's
womb,
Nor hid trouble from mine eyes.

* * * * * * *

"Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery,
And life unto the bitter in soul;
Who long for death, but it cometh not,
And dig for it more than for hid treasures;
Who rejoice exceedingly,
And are glad, when they can find the grave?"

—*Job 3: 3-10, 20-22.*

After this passionate and poetic outburst Job's friends open up their theological attack, in which they try to convince him that his troubles are the direct and specific outcome of some vile and secret transgressions. The theology of the time argued that prosperity is the mark of divine favor while adversity and suffering are the signs of Jehovah's disapprobation and displeasure. A good idea may be wrongly interpreted.

Eliphaz, the first speaker, appears more interested in theology than he is in Job; for he says:

"Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being
innocent?
Or where were the upright cut off?
According as I have seen, they that plow iniquity,
And sow trouble, reap the same."

—*Job 4:7, 8.*

Without mercy Eliphaz cites cases analogous to that of Job and makes the name of each disaster bite like a serpent and sting like an adder; for he insists on saying, "I have seen." He supports his orthodoxy by a sort of pragmatistic philosophy which makes it look

as if God's throne were built on marble instead of on mercy.

The second speaker, Bildad, is equally orthodox and equally horrifically harsh in his theological concepts. Because he adheres to authority, and to that only, he must make his traditional ideas of theology hurt Job and not help him. What Job really needed was not theology, or man's notion of God, but God himself. Bildad assumes that the men of the earlier days had found out everything about God that could ever be known. Bildad does not think; he retails the traditional ideas of the fathers. He has, in religion, an inferiority complex and he unites others with him: "We are but of yesterday, and know nothing." Because he represents what others have told him he says to Job:

"Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man,
Neither will he uphold the evil-doers."
—*Job 8:20.*

The third speaker or comforter, Zophar, is orthodox but severely shallow and very discourteous; for he attacks Job as an utterer of empty words:

"Should not the multitude of words be answered?
And should a man full of talk be justified?
Should thy boastings make men hold their peace?
And when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?
For thou sayest, My doctrine is pure,
And I am clean in thine eyes.
But oh that God would speak,
And open his lips against thee,
And that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom!
For he is manifold in understanding.

Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth."

—*Job 11: 2-6.*

In spite of Zophar's idea that Job is a mere babbler, a mere user of words, he himself uses words which he thinks are an answer to Job's daring attempts to find God; and, indeed, some of them are pleasing to the sufferer, for when Zophar says, "Oh that God would speak," in a naïve way, he is wishing for what Job has longed for since his adversity. This expressed wish is the only part of Zophar's speech that makes an appreciable impression on Job; for the sorrowful sufferer keeps listening for the voice of Jehovah. However, he listens in vain because Zophar does not know enough about that voice to make it vocal for Job. Thus ends the first cycle of the debate.

Each of Job's three comforters has been answered by him, and so answered that it seems necessary to continue the debate. Job's insistence upon his integrity, and his daring and apparently irreverent way of speaking about God, stirs up his friends to speak again and so we find another cycle of speeches. The dialogue still centers in the theological belief of the time, that prosperity comes to the good and adversity to the wicked. This is Job's creed, too, but while his friends are content with it Job, in his suffering, is in rebellion against it; and this because he does not think that it fairly represents God.

In this second cycle of speeches Job's friends are less the debaters than the personal accusers. Eliphaz says to Job:

"Art thou the first man that was born?
Or wast thou brought forth before the hills?
Hast thou heard the secret counsel of God?
And dost thou limit wisdom to thyself?
What knowest thou, that we know not?
What understandest thou, which is not in us?
With us are both the grayheaded and the very aged men,
Much elder than thy father"

—*Job 15: 7-10.*

Eliphaz continues:

"I will show thee, hear thou me;
And that which I have seen I will declare
(Which wise men have told
From their fathers, and have not hid it;
Unto whom alone the land was given,
And no stranger passed among them):
The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days,
Even the number of years that are laid up for the oppressor.
A sound of terrors is in his ears;
In prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him."

—*Job 15: 17-21.*

Bildad, the second speaker, appears once more in the dialogue; and he, too, is harsh, for in speaking of the man who has sinned—and he means Job—he says:

"His remembrance shall perish from the earth,
And he shall have no name in the street.
He shall be driven from light into darkness,
And chased out of the world.
He shall have neither son nor son's son among his people,
Nor any remaining where he sojourned.
They that come after shall be astonished at his day,
As they that went before were affrighted.

Surely such are the dwellings of the unrighteous,
And this is the place of Him that knoweth not God."

—*Job 18: 17-21.*

This is the sentiment which Bildad wishes to sink into Job's heart.

Zophar appears the second time, also. This speaker, with Job the sinner in mind, says:

"All darkness is laid up for his treasures:
A fire not blown by man shall devour him;
It shall consume that which is left in his tent.
The heavens shall reveal his iniquity,
And the earth shall rise up against him.
The increase of his house shall depart;
His goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath.
This is the portion of a wicked man from God,
And the heritage appointed unto him by God."

—*Job 20: 26-29.*

This statement from Zophar sustains his theology but it brings Job no comfort.

The debate continues with Job's comforters ardently advocating their beliefs. The first speaker in this third cycle is again Eliphaz, who says to Job:

"Can a man be profitable unto God?
Surely he that is wise is profitable unto himself.
Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous?
Or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?
Is it for thy fear of him that he reproveth thee,
That he entereth with thee into judgment?
Is not thy wickedness great?"

—*Job 22: 2-5.*

This last speech of Eliphaz brings Job no comfort: it is like mockery to him, for in it he does not find the God whom he seeks.

Bildad appears the third time in the debate, but his words are few, even if they are not well chosen. The speech, which is characteristic of his school of theology, is very short. Speaking of Jehovah he says:

"Dominion and fear are with him;
He maketh peace in his high places.
Is there any number of his armies?
And upon whom doth not his light arise?
How then can man be just with God?
Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?
Behold, even the moon hath no brightness,
And the stars are not pure in his sight:
How much less man, that is a worm!
And the son of man, that is a worm!"
—*Job 25: 2-6.*

Bildad has a low estimate of man, and he includes Job. For some reason Zophar does not speak the third time. The words of the visitors, therefore, end with the last speech of Bildad.

To complete the story of this dramatic poem we gather up the ideas used by Job in answer to his theological friends. At times Job's line of thought appears disconnected, daring, and full of despair, but he never loses sight of the fact that he wishes Jehovah to be the Daysman or Arbiter of his case. At times he speaks harshly of God's treatment of him, yet he wishes God to be the final court of appeal.

In all of Job's side of the great debate on the question, "Why does a good man suffer?" he never admits that there is any truth in the allegations of his

comforters; for at every turn of thought he insists on his integrity and demands kindness from his friends and justice from God. It is not a lesson in theology that he seeks from his friends, but a manifestation of justice from Jehovah that he is profoundly anxious to secure.

Before Job closes his argument he lets it be known that he knows as much as his friends. The following I take from one of his speeches, as he addresses the debaters:

> "No doubt but ye are the people,
> And wisdom shall die with you.
> But I have understanding as well as you;
> I am not inferior to you."
>
> —*Job 12: 2, 3.*
>
> "Lo, mine eye hath seen all this,
> Mine ear hath heard and understood it.
> What ye know, the same do I know also:
> I am not inferior unto you."
>
> —*Job 13: 1, 2.*

This is not egotism, but legitimate self-defense. This self-defense is further continued in these strategic words:

> "I have heard many such things:
> Miserable comforters are ye all.
> Shall vain words have an end?
> Or what provoketh thee that thou answerest?
> I also could speak as ye do;
> If your soul were in my soul's stead,
> I could join words together against you,
> And shake my head at you.
> But I would strengthen you with my mouth,
> And the solace of my lips would assuage your grief."
>
> —*Job 16: 2-5.*

Although Job has as much knowledge as his friends yet his grief is not assuaged and he continues to cry to God for justice or vindication; for he still insists on his integrity. This is clear from his language:

"Till I die I will not put away mine integrity from me.
My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go."

—*Job 27: 5, 6.*

Of this uprightness he wishes a favorable judgment from Jehovah; for he does not see any connection between his suffering and any special sin on his part. He closes the debate by an appeal to his innocence.

"The most unkindest cut of all" is found in the immature thought and foundationless charges of Elihu, a young man who had been listening in to the debate. He fancies that he can convince Job that he is a miserable sinner and thus accomplish what the older men could not. There is a little dramatic tang in this audacity of youth with its easy solution for great problems. Elihu knows so much that he declares he will burst if not allowed to speak. This is the hyperbole of youth. When he does speak he is overconceited and very diffuse. He speaks of visions and dreams and pain and sickness as means used by Jehovah for the betterment of men, but his generalities did not lead him to understand Job's case. He did not know that though Job at times seemed to lose his theology he never lost his faith in God. A philosophy of life that does not meet the needs of life is worse than no philosophy at all. Elihu's philosophy neither convinced Job of heinous sin nor explained how he could find satisfaction for his heart's yearn-

ing. But we must not take this young man too seriously. His part in the discussion, however, shows that the greatest problems of life are not found in the intellect but in the heart, out of which are the true and real issues of human life.

The "Critique of Pure Reason" which fascinates the younger thinker never solves any of the perplexing problems of the soul, never illuminates any of the mysteries of the deeper things of life—those things that humanity meets when it is wrestling "not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against . . . wickedness in the heavenly places." Elihu had an intellectual program into which he fancied he could fit the spiritual struggle of the man Job, but the more he talked the less Job was impressed or helped. The dazzling magnificence of Jehovah interests Elihu, but the young man does not see the divine love, and therefore can offer no help to Job in his internal conflict. It is interesting that in the Almighty's answer to Job there is no reference to Elihu's speeches. The answer of Jehovah keeps in mind the other speeches of the debate.

The debaters have had their say; it is now Jehovah's turn to speak, and he speaks in a magnificent poem, a poem in which he makes reply to the ideas of Job and his three friends. Jehovah lets Elihu's speech pass out of sight. This is retribution enough for zeal without knowledge.

It is almost sacrilegious to discuss the speech or answer of the Almighty: we shall therefore let the answer speak for itself. Suffice it, meantime, to say that Jehovah's answer proceeds along the same line as does the theologian's argument from nature for

the existence of a God who is intelligent and, therefore, a personality; who is ethical and therefore just; and who, because he is intelligent and ethical, is lovingly interested in all that concerns his universe. The student as he reads the inimitable poem which contains God's answer to Job will be greatly stirred in soul by the majestic pictures of nature which have for their purpose the unfolding of the love of God for all his creation. The Almighty's answer follows:

"Then Jehovah answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

"Who is this that darkeneth counsel
By words without knowledge?
Gird up now thy loins like a man;
For I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Declare, if thou hast understanding.
Who determined the measures thereof, if thou knowest?
Or who stretched the line upon it?
Whereupon were the foundations thereof fastened?
Or who laid the corner-stone thereof,
When the morning stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

"Or who shut up the sea with doors,
When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb;
When I made clouds the garment thereof,
And thick darkness a swaddling-band for it,
And marked out for it my bound,
And set bars and doors,
And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further;
And here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

"Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days began,
And caused the dayspring to know its place;
That it might take hold of the ends of the earth,
And the wicked be shaken out of it?
It is changed as clay under the seal;
And all things stand forth as a garment:
And from the wicked their light is withholden,
And the high arm is broken.

"Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?
Or hast thou walked in the recesses of the deep?
Have the gates of death been revealed unto thee?
Or hast thou seen the gates of the shadow of death?
Hast thou comprehended the earth in its breadth?
Declare, if thou knowest it all.

"Where is the way to the dwelling of light?
And as for darkness, where is the place thereof,
That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof,
And that thou shouldest discern the paths to the house thereof?
Doubtless, thou knowest, for thou wast then born,
And the number of thy days is great!
Hast thou entered the treasuries of the snow,
Or hast thou seen the treasuries of the hail,
Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,
Against the day of battle and war?
By what way is the light parted,
Or the east wind scattered upon the earth?

"Who hath cleft a channel for the waterflood,
Or a way for the lightning of the thunder;
To cause it to rain on a land where no man is;
On the wilderness, wherein there is no man;
To satisfy the waste and desolate ground,
And to cause the tender grass to spring forth?
Hath the rain a father?
Or who hath begotten the drops of dew?

Out of whose womb came the ice?
And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?
The waters hide themselves and become like stone,
And the face of the deep is frozen.

"Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades,
Or loose the bands of Orion?
Canst thou lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season?
Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train?
Knowest thou the ordinances of the heavens?
Canst thou establish the dominion thereof in the earth?

"Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds,
That abundance of waters may cover thee?
Canst thou send forth lightnings, that they may go,
And say unto thee, Here we are?
Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?
Or who hath given understanding to the mind?
Who can number the clouds by wisdom?
Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven,
When the dust runneth into a mass,
And the clods cleave fast together?

"Canst thou hunt the prey for the lioness,
Or satisfy the appetite of the young lions,
When they couch in their dens,
And abide in the covert to lie in wait?

"Who provideth for the raven his prey,
When his young ones cry unto God,
And wander for lack of food?
Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth?
Or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?
Canst thou number the months that they fulfil?
Or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?

They bow themselves, they bring forth their young,
They cast out their pains.
Their young ones become strong, they grow up in the open field;
They go forth, and return not again.

"Who hath sent out the wild ass free?
Or who hath loosed the bonds of the swift ass,
Whose home I have made the wilderness,
And the salt land his dwelling-place?
He scorneth the tumult of the city,
Neither heareth he the shoutings of the driver.
The range of the mountains is his pasture,
And he searcheth after every green thing.
Will the wild-ox be content to serve thee?
Or will he abide by thy crib?
Canst thou bind the wild-ox with his band in the furrow?
Or will he harrow the valleys after thee?
Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great?
Or wilt thou leave to him thy labor?
Wilt thou confide in him, that he will bring home thy seed,
And gather the grain of thy threshing-floor?

"The wings of the ostrich wave proudly;
But are they the pinions and plumage of love?
For she leaveth her eggs on the earth,
And warmeth them in the dust,
And forgetteth that the foot may crush them,
Or that the wild beast may trample them.
She dealeth hardly with her young ones, as if they were not hers:
Though her labor be in vain, she is without fear;
Because God hath deprived her of wisdom,
Neither hath he imparted to her understanding.
What time she lifteth up herself on high,
She scorneth the horse and his rider.

"Hast thou given the horse his might?
Hast thou clothed his neck with the quivering mane?
Hast thou made him to leap as a locust?
The glory of his snorting is terrible.
He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength:
He goeth out to meet the armed men.
He mocketh at fear, and is not dismayed;
Neither turneth he back from the sword.
The quiver rattleth against him,
The flashing spear and the javelin.
He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage;
Neither believeth he that it is the voice of the trumpet.
As oft as the trumpet soundeth he saith, Aha!
And he smelleth the battle afar off,
The thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

"Is it by thy wisdom that the hawk soareth,
And stretcheth her wings toward the south?
Is it at thy command that the eagle mounteth up,
And maketh her nest on high?
On the cliff she dwelleth, and maketh her home,
Upon the point of the cliff, and the stronghold.
From thence she spieth out the prey;
Her eyes behold it afar off.
Her young ones also suck up blood:
And where the slain are, there is she.

"Moreover Jehovah answered Job, and said,
Shall he that cavilleth contend with the Almighty?
He that argueth with God, let him answer it.

"Then Job answereth Jehovah, and said,
Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee?
I lay my hand upon my mouth.

Once have I spoken, and I will not answer;
Yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.

"Then Jehovah answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
Gird up thy loins now like a man:
I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
Wilt thou even annul my judgment?
Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be justified?
Or hast thou an arm like God?
And canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

"Deck thyself now with excellency and dignity;
And array thyself with honor and majesty.
Pour forth the overflowings of thine anger;
And look upon every one that is proud, and abase him.
Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low;
And tread down the wicked where they stand.
Hide them in the dust together;
Bind their faces in the hidden place.
Then will I also confess of thee
That thine own right hand can save thee.

"Behold now, behemoth, which I made as well as thee;
He eateth grass as an ox.
Lo now, his strength is in his loins,
And his force is in the muscles of his belly.
He moveth his tail like a cedar:
The sinews of his thighs are knit together.
His bones are as tubes of brass;
His limbs are like bars of iron.

"He is the chief of the ways of God:
He only that made him giveth him his sword.
Surely the mountains bring him forth food,

Where all the beasts of the field do play.
He lieth under the lotus-trees,
In the covert of the reed, and the fen.
The lotus-trees cover him with their shade;
The willows of the brook compass him about.
Behold, if a river overflow, he trembleth not;
He is confident, though a Jordan swell even to his mouth.
Shall any take him when he is on the watch,
Or pierce through his nose with a snare?

"Canst thou draw out leviathan with a fishhook?
Or press down his tongue with a cord?
Canst thou put a rope into his nose?
Or pierce his jaw through with a hook?
Will he make many supplications unto thee?
Or will he speak soft words unto thee?
Will he make a covenant with thee,
That thou shouldest take him for a servant for ever?
Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?
Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?
Will the bands of fishermen make traffic of him?
Will they part him among the merchants?
Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons,
Or his head with fish-spears?
Lay thy hand upon him;
Remember the battle, and do so no more.
Behold, the hope of him is in vain:
Will not one be cast down even at the sight of him?
None is so fierce that he dare stir him up;
Who then is he that can stand before me?
Who hath first given unto me, that I should repay him?
Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.

"I will not keep silence concerning his limbs,
Nor his mighty strength, nor his goodly frame.
Who can strip off his outer garment?

Who shall come within his jaws?
Who can open the doors of his face?
Round about his teeth is terror.
His strong scales are his pride,
Shut up together as with a close seal.
One is so near to another,
That no air can come between them.
They are joined one to another;
They stick together, so that they cannot be sundered.
His sneezings flash forth light,
And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.
Out of his mouth go burning torches,
And sparks of fire leap forth.
Out of his nostrils a smoke goeth,
As of a boiling pot and burning rushes.
His breath kindleth coals,
And a flame goeth forth from his mouth.
In his neck abideth strength,
And terror danceth before him.
The flakes of his flesh are joined together:
They are firm upon him; they cannot be moved.
His heart is as firm as a stone;
Yea, firm as the nether millstone.
When he raiseth himself up, the mighty are afraid:
By reason of consternation they are beside themselves.
If one lay at him with the sword, it cannot avail;
Nor the spear, the dart, nor the pointed shaft.
He counteth iron as straw,
And brass as rotten wood.
The arrow cannot make him flee:
Sling-stones are turned with him into stubble.
Clubs are counted as stubble:
He laugheth at the rushing of the javelin.
His underparts are like sharp potsherds:
He spreadeth as it were a threshing-wain upon the mire.
He maketh the deep to boil like a pot:

He maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.
He maketh a path to shine after him;
One would think the deep to be hoary.
Upon earth there is not his like,
That is made without fear.
He beholdeth everything that is high:
He is king over all the sons of pride."

—*Job, chs. 38 to 41.*

Now that God has spoken and has fulfilled the wish of one of the debaters a great wave of spiritual power sweeps not over Job's soul but into it; and a light brighter than the midday sun shines into the Egyptian darkness of his mind, and lo! it is daybreak in his mind and in his soul. And, as one writer has very pertinently put it, "The mystery of life is not thereby abolished, but it is illuminated."[7]

Job was at last restored to the favor and the friendship of Jehovah, but the restoration came when Job, in penitence, bowed before God. The significant thought in his restoration is expressed thus: "And Jehovah turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends." At last he is a man not of controversy but of prayer.

Now that we know the story we are in a position to ask whether it lends itself to dramatic representation and, if so, in what way. Certain things we may at once say. First, this Book of Job is not a tragedy; for the particular triumphs over the universal. The book ends happily; for Job was restored and the Lord gave him twice as much as he had lost. Second, the piece of literature is not constructed like a Greek

[7] J. E. McFadyen, "The Problem of Pain," p. 229.

play. There is nothing at all in any sense Greek in it. It is purely Hebraic. In the third place, it cannot be divided into acts and scenes like a Shakespearean play; for in attempting so to divide it violence is done to the drift of the author's thought. We may, however, give as logical divisions of this book the following; and it may be acted within these limits.

There is first the introduction, which takes up the first two chapters, which are really in prose form. This portion tells the story of Job and his losses and his suffering; it tells also about the coming of his three friends, who were moved to tears at the sight of the solitary sufferer.

The next part of the book contains the first cycle of speeches in the form of a debate. In this debate there are several very interesting dramatic situations. We may name this part Act I, chs. 3 to 14.

The next part is devoted to a second cycle of speeches in which the ideas are more concretely expressed. Here, too, there are dramatic situations and dramatic intensity. This is Act II, chs. 15 to 21.

The next division we name Act III, chs. 22 to 31. Here the debate is continued. In this cycle only two of Job's friends take part. Evidently the author thought that Zophar had already said enough. His sudden disappearance is a dramatic incident.

The next part of the book may be designated to do the duty of Act IV. This act begins with ch. 32 and the advent of Elihu and ends with ch. 41, which closes the speech of Jehovah. There is dramatic irony in the fact that both Job and Jehovah ignore Elihu and his speeches.

Because I cannot find the five necessary Horatian acts [8] I am obliged to speak of the last chapter as an epilogue. This part of the book gives an account of Job's repentance and his acceptance with God. His repentance was a real admission that he was not sinless; was an admission that he had never had a real vision of himself; was an admission that, until he heard the voice of God in the whirlwind, he had not had a real vision of God. This vision of himself as a sinner, and this vision of God as just and holy and loving, made him abhor himself and repent in dust and ashes.

Now that Job has been changed from being merely a moral man to being a godly man he is sent as Jehovah's messenger to set his three friends right with God. This is accomplished through sacrifice. The precise words of the book will serve us here:

"And it was so, that, after Jehovah had spoken these words unto Job, Jehovah said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Now therefore, take unto you seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept, that I deal not with you after your folly; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as Jehovah commanded them: and Jehovah accepted Job.

"And Jehovah turned the captivity of Job, when

[8] Horace, "*Ars Poetica.*"

he prayed for his friends: and Jehovah gave Job twice as much as he had before."

—Job 42:7-10.

Then the conclusion of the whole matter is that Jehovah is supreme; that he is a God of order; that he is responsible for the moral order of the universe; that he loves all his creatures; that he loves man; and that, though he loves man, every man—Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, Job—must approach Jehovah in his own appointed way; so that God may be all and in all, ever blessed and forever King.

By following the divisions which I have named, which are the natural and logical divisions of Job, this book may be dramatized. If we view the book as having dramatic qualities or possibilities there are certain ideas, conditions, and qualities which we must expect to find. Do we find them in this great piece of literature? Let the following facts be the answer.

The historical portion of the book is a real foundation for that dramatic quality which we call epic. While it is true that we cannot possibly assume the literality of all the details that are inwoven, yet we must keep in mind that Job was an historical person and that the places named are also real. On the other hand, we must admit that Job is made so unusual that he is presented as an epical personality. He is the greatest man in the East. The first two chapters are epic narrative. One of the conditions of the drama is, therefore, adequately satisfied.

The lyrical element is another part of drama. Have we any of it in this book? The careful reader of Job has anticipated the answer. There is no finer example of lyric anywhere than in Job's lamentation concern-

ing the day of his birth which is found in ch. 3. To read this lyric is to feel the intensity of its subjectivity; and to note its brevity is but to add another proof that it is high lyricism. It is divided into three parts or, more exactly, into three stanzas: the first stanza extends to the end of v. 10; the second, ends with v. 19; and the third, with the end of the chapter. This strophic arrangement I take from the translation of The Jewish Publication Society of America. The first strophe is a bitter diatribe against the day of his birth; the second is a wail or a dirge that favors the dark, dank, damp silence of the tomb; while the third strophe is burdened with a great question as to why light is bestowed on a man who is in deep distress. There are other lyrical portions in the book, but this third chapter meets dramatic needs.

But there are parts in the book that are in themselves dramatic. When Job's wife comes out to the ash heap to look at him and exclaims, "Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity? renounce God, and die," there is an undoubtedly dramatic situation. When Job in fierce and somewhat egotistic self-defense says to his friends: "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you," Job 12:2, the statement is nothing less than dramatic. Then, too, when Jehovah asks Job to take the reins of universal government and thus sit upon the throne of the universe one's imagination is stretched to the utmost; it is stretched to reach from the ash heap in Idumæa to the high throne of God. The great gulf that is fixed between these two stirs one's dramatic blood. The distance of the fall of Lucifer was not greater than this.

How dramatic is the space through which God's message travels!

Another demand of the drama is character portrayal through the medium of what a man says and does. Do the characters in The Book of Job so speak and act that they may, with any degree of truth, be listed as *dramatis personæ?* First of all, there is the character of the book's hero. What manner of man is he? Is he dramatic? Well, he is the world's finest example of patience; he is not "patience on a monument," but patience on an ash mound. He graciously receives the taunts of his wife and bravely, the baseless accusations of his friends. His patience is fiercely tried; for the conflict is between his faith and the forces that are trying to destroy his faith. Throughout the book Job is the center of this conflict. The *raison d'être* of the book is the way in which Job will answer one of two questions which hem him in. One of these questions was asked by Jehovah: "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" The other was asked by Satan: "Doth Job fear God for nought?" Will Job hold to his faith in God or will he succumb to the theology or philosophy of Satan that his religion is purely utilitarian? In other words, is Job religious because of material prosperity? In the midst of these questions Job is passing through a conflict that involves his integrity. When he passes through one discussion with his visitors he says, in spirit, "I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more." In this spirit of courage he goes on to the end and to triumph, the triumph of faith. This character has courage, patience, and faith.

There are other characters in the book: of what sort

are they? There is, first, the lead-off man in the debate, Eliphaz, who is courteous but extremely dogmatic. He loves to appeal to experience, and his dogmatism is built thereon. "I have seen" is his formula. Throughout his speeches he shows himself an inferior research man since he does not set himself to get at the root of Job's trouble. He does not try to put his soul in the stead of Job's soul. In his own way, however, he is eloquent and possessed of much skill in speech. He has much general information, but he is superficial concerning the deeper questions that trouble the human spirit.

Bildad is another interlocutor. What sort of man is he? He is the type of person that ties himself to the past. Much knowledge he has concerning the copious past, but none concerning the complex present. He cares nothing for new ideas even if they be true. He admits, of course, that a man must have ideas, but he insists that these must come from the fathers, all the time forgetting that the fathers were men of like passions. We know his type.

Zophar is another of the debaters. How does he unfold himself? He is, to say the least, insolent and presumptuous—insolent to Job and presumptuous towards God. He grows impatient with Job and calls him a babbler; he confesses as his creed that the ways of God are past finding out, yet he thinks that he can adequately expound them. Besides his insolence and his presumption there is also in him a touch of boorishness. This is seen when he says:

> "But vain man is void of understanding,
> Yea, man is born as a wild ass's colt."
> —*Job 11:12.*

Zophar may mean well, as one author has said of him, but it is difficult to see it. He is narrow in his sympathies and so far as doing any good to Job is concerned he passes by on the other side.

There is yet another debater, though some critics exclude him. I mean Elihu, the young man who has been standing near by and listening to the debate. What sort of character does he reveal? There is in him the enthusiasm of youth, the pride of youth in its ability, but there is also the poverty of the experience of life. Elihu has an untried program in which he has explicit confidence. The thought in his program is academic, logical, but lacking in poise and breadth. He is proud of his knowledge.

These four persons and Job are the human agents in this great drama of antiquity. There are, however, supernatural personalities: Satan; the sons of God, or the angels; and God himself. We do not propose to measure these by any ethical norms for human conduct. They belong in the invisible world, and the man who would measure such characters would need supernatural standards of measurement. Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Job may be measured, but God is immeasurable.

Job has at last learned to know this immeasurable, great, and supernatural Being who is holy, omniscient, and omnipotent, of whom and for whom and to whom are all things, the Lord God who turned the captivity of Job and made "the latter end of Job more than his beginning," Job 42:12, so that "Job died, being old and full of days," Job 42:17.

CHAPTER VIII

LITERARY FORMS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament there are twenty-seven parts, sometimes called books. Of these twenty-seven books twenty-one are epistles. This epistolary form in the days of the apostles and in the early days of Christianity was not new; for though it was not extensively used by the Greeks it was quite frequently used by the Romans in reaching the various parts of the Empire with messages of state and vital importance. "Saint Paul the traveler and the Roman citizen,"[1] being acquainted with this type of communication, evidently saw in it an efficient means for the promotion of necessary instruction in Christianity.

Necessary instruction in the principles of religion is the explanation of the origin of the Pauline letters. This means that they were not written for the sake of producing literature, but for meeting the needs of churches or individuals. The letter to the Galatian churches was written to correct misinformation which had been given to those churches. The letter to the Romans was sent to that church to point out the real meaning of the term "righteousness." The epistles to the church at Corinth were sent to give advice concerning many difficult problems about belief, life, and conduct. When Paul wrote from a Roman prison to

[1] Title of book by W. A. Ramsay.

the church at Philippi it was to convey a friendly message to people who had lavished friendship and love upon him. The Epistle to the Colossians was intended to combat a heresy that had crept into the church of that city. The letter to the Ephesians had for its purpose the promotion of the idea of church unity. The letters to the Thessalonians have, in a large measure, to do with the Messiah's second coming. The letters to Timothy and to Titus gave pastoral advice to these two young men whose life work would be that of ministers of the grace of Christ. To Timothy, his son in the faith, Paul says, "But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry," II Timothy 4:5. To Titus he says, "Speak thou the things which befit the sound doctrine," Titus 2:1. In The Epistle to the Hebrews, which, for reasons, I include in the Pauline list of letters, the chief purpose is to set forth the high priesthood of Christ.

The other letters in New Testament literature neither bulk so large nor mean so much historically or doctrinally in the early history of Christianity as do the epistles of Saint Paul. They are, however, of importance in the general field either of history or of literature. The letter of James I am omitting because I have treated that as one of the wisdom books. John wrote three epistles, two of which are merely short notes. The first letter is theological and Christological:

"These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God."

—I John 5:13.

The Second Epistle of John, addressed to the "elect lady," is practically a private note to rejoice with her that her children are walking in the truth; while the third, addressed to "Gaius the beloved," congratulates him on his fidelity and deals with one or two other matters of rather private interest.

Saint Peter is the author of two letters; and it is a matter of ecclesiastical interest to note the thought expressed in them. The first letter was written to those who were suffering on account of their religion. In it he speaks of the trial of their faith and the purifying of their souls in obeying the truth, or being buffeted on account of well-doing. The purpose of the second epistle is to stir up their pure minds to remember Christ.

The letter of Saint Jude is very short and its author was comparatively unknown. The purpose of the letter is expressed in v. 3:

"Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."

Having seen the manner in which these letters came to be written I now discuss the suitability of the epistolary form for the frank, free, and fresh presentation of matters of vital and personal interest. This was stimulating to the recipients of the letters, particularly to those who received letters from Paul.

The writing of letters was a pleasing exercise to that great missionary; for it offered him the opportunity of expressing thought concerning his ruling

passion. His deeply emotional life found in this type of writing a magnificent channel through which it could make rich and productive the lives of others. He was a great genius and, what was more important for his work, he was a lover of humanity. This deep emotion goes out to the people of his own race:

"Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved."
—*Romans 10:1.*

To the members of the Christian Church at Philippi there is the same soulful message:

"Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved." —*Philippians 4:1.*

Having seen that these letters, especially those of Saint Paul, came into being to meet the needs of the Christian Church, and having stated it as my belief that such a literary form best suited the apostolic mind, I now examine the letters as to form and spirit.

The letters of Saint Paul follow a rather definite physical organization. Most of them have salutation, teaching and exhortation, and conclusion. The salutations stamp the writer as a man of supreme culture for he uses a Greek word which contains the feelings of a man of good breeding and, also, a Hebrew word which expresses the finest feelings of the human heart. The English translation of these words is "grace," "peace," but the significance of the terms is best seen in their true relationships:

"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints that are at Ephesus, and the

faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.''

—*Ephesians 1:1, 2.*

Following the salutation there is usually a doctrinal part; as in the letter to the Romans where he discusses *dikaiosune,* or righteousness. Then comes the division of the letter in which he urges his readers to give earnest heed to the doctrine which he has expounded. Finally, there is a conclusion which is appropriate and convincing. Into this physical organization Paul has put thought that is pressed down and running over. Similarly, the other letter writers have given their readers much food for thought.

Quite a marked quality of Paul's ability to express his thought in the form of letter-writing is his versatility. Although many of his letters have similar physical organization he never falls into sameness of expression. Ever is his mind alert to grasp the thought that will suit the situation; ever does his mind set itself to understand the moral significance of an event; ever does this mental equipment make his pen that of a ready writer; ever does his philosophy of life constrain him to see in life its difficult problems and its vast needs; ever does he write letters to help his brethren to solve their problems and meet their needs. In all of this study of life and of human relationships he found life complex and interrelated; and his letters followed life's highway; for that very reason, they are varied and the writer is versatile. A variety of pleasant, pertinent, and profitable thoughts expressed in appropriate language charms the reader of the letters of the New Testament,

preëminently those of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

In a true sense the letters of the New Testament may be called polite literature. The spirit of the scholar and the gentleman is evident in the manner of thought and expression. The true courtesy of Hellenism and of Hebraism is felt by every attentive reader. The letters of the New Testament literature contain these two qualities and where these qualities meet they express the culture of both head and heart. Knowledge and beautiful feeling are here delightfully blended. A good example of Paul's clear thinking and of his fervid feeling is the beautiful thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians:

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a

man, I have put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known. But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

The reading public is indebted to a little book, "The Greatest Thing in the World";[2] for that book shows what a keen piece of thinking and deep feeling the chapter is. Both the analysis of the chapter and its synthesis are alike good, and show Paul's keen logic and spiritual insight. The climax of the chapter is its crowning beauty; and of this climax Drummond makes much.

Saint Paul is Christ's best interpreter, and he is one of the world's greatest letter writers. The marvel is that Paul and his fellow letter writers could accomplish so much in that brief but very popular form of literature—the letter.

The parable is not exclusively a New Testament literary type; for the Old Testament has its parables, too. It is, however, in the second part of Bible literature that the parable is seen in its best form. The term is of Greek origin, being derived from *parabole* which means a comparison. The corresponding verb, *paraballein,* signifies to compare on thing with another, or one quality with another.

Between the meaning of the term in the Old Testament and that in the New Testament there is a difference. In the former it is not always the same, for it is sometimes used as a riddle or dark saying. The psalmist says:

[2] By H. Drummond.

"I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings of old,
Which we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told us."
—*Psalm 78: 2, 3.*

Once, at least, the parable is pure invention for the purpose of satiric didacticism:

"And Jehovah sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As Jehovah liveth, the man that hath done this is worthy to die: and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

"And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man."
—*II Samuel 12:1-7.*

The parable in the New Testament is different and uniform; for each example is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. For instance, the parable of The Ten Virgins is based on an Oriental wedding custom, but its meaning is spiritual. A whole year of Christ's public ministry was devoted to instruction through the medium of this literary device which in his hands proved definite, striking, efficient.

The parable, because of its naturalness, is a gifted way of expressing thought. It is, as Archbishop Trench has pointed out, different from the fable in that it is higher in nature because it presents "no speaking trees nor reasoning beasts"; different from the myth in which the truth and that which is the vehicle of the truth "are wholly blended together"; and different also from both proverb and allegory: from the proverb because the truth is ampler in the parable; from the allegory because the comparison is clearer in the parable.

"To sum up all, then, the parable differs from the fable, moving as it does in a spiritual world, and never transgressing the actual order of things natural; from the mythus, there being in the latter an unconscious blending of the deeper meaning with the outward symbol, while the two remain separate and inseparable in the parable; from the proverb, inasmuch as it is more fully carried out, and not accidentally and occasionally but necessarily figurative; from the allegory, comparing, as it does, one thing with another, but, at the same time, preserving them apart as an inner and an outer, and not transferring, as does the allegory, the properties and qualities and relations of one to the other." [3]

Believing that it will help the student to get a firm grasp upon the technique and thought of the parables I offer a discussion of one of them and this will serve as a key to unlock the treasures of the others. I choose to discuss the parable of The Soils.

In this parable Jesus made use of what was then the commonest pursuit of life, that of farming. No doubt when he spoke it his eye was resting upon a

[3] R. C. Trench, "Notes on the Parables," p. 14.

farmer who had plowed and prepared his field and was now scattering the seed. This furnished him with the idea of using different kinds of soil to illustrate different moods of the mind or states of the soul. Of the different kinds of soil there are four, each of which has its own distinct quality. I quote the parable:

"And he spake to them many things in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went forth to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the birds came and devoured them: and others fell upon the rocky places, where they had not much earth: and straightway they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And others fell upon the thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked them: and others fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

—*Matthew 13: 3-8.*

We are fortunate that we are not left to conjecture concerning his meaning; for he has given it in answer to a question as to why he spoke in parables. His answer follows:

"Hear then ye the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the evil one, and snatcheth away that which hath been sown in his heart. This is he that was sown by the way side. And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway he stumbleth. And he that was sown among the thorns, this is

he that heareth the word; and the care of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. And he that was sown upon the good ground, this is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; who verily beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

—*Matthew 13: 18-23.*

The first hearer because of an impenetrable mind hears the word but does not understand; the second hears the word but it does not sink in and settle because it does not root sufficiently; the third hears the word but allows inimical forces to choke it; the fourth hears the word and receives it into a mind that understands it, and it grows and bears fruit.

These clear and simple ideas in the parable are capable of great amplification, and Jesus intended that they should be amplified in the thought of his hearers. Indeed, this is one of the higher ministries of that form of literature which Christ made peculiarly his own. It is interesting to note in passing that his teaching has a literary background.

The wayside hearer represents a type of mind indifferent, prejudiced, preoccupied. Into this mind truth cannot enter. The stony ground hearer is the one whose emotions are likely and enthusiastic, but these emotions are all on the surface, and not abiding. Their joy is represented by the Latin word *laetitia* which expresses the feelings of the man who throws his hat into the air because the election goes his way. Of the joy implied in the Latin term *gaudium* he knows nothing; for that term means a deep-rooted joy which is continuous, abiding, and unattended by outward and surface display of feeling. The thorny

ground hearer is the person who receives truth, even with some degree of seriousness, but does not hold it firmly in ownership; for he permits the things that are not spiritual in life to choke the truth.

The good ground hearer is the man who hears truth, receives it, and follows after it all the days of his life —not to prove that truth exists but to profit by the truth which exists independent of man's thought. Incidentally, a correct understanding of this parable would be of profit to the mechanistic psychologist and to the pragmatistic philosopher.

This form has been made use of in secular literature. Dr. Henry van Dyke, in "The Poetry of Tennyson," makes reference to that poet's use of the parable form. In his interpretation of "Idylls of the King" he says:

"We must distinguish, then, between the allegorical fragments which Tennyson has woven into his work, and the substance of the Idylls; between the scenery and mechanical appliances, and the actors who move upon the stage. The attempt to interpret the poem as a strict allegory breaks down at once and spoils the story. Suppose you say that Arthur is the Conscience, and Guinevere is the Flesh, and Merlin is the Intellect; then pray what is Lancelot, and what is Geraint, and what is Vivien? What business has the Conscience to fall in love with the Flesh? What attraction has Vivien for the Intellect without any passions? . . . The whole affair becomes absurd, unreal, incomprehensible, uninteresting.

"But when we take the king and his people as actual men and women, when we put ourselves into the story and let it carry us along, then we understand that it is a parable; that is to say, it casts beside itself an image, a reflection, of something spiritual, just as a man walking in the sunlight is

followed by his shadow. It is a tale of human life, and therefore, being told with a purpose, it shadows Sense at war with Soul.

"Let us take up this idea of the conflict between sense and soul and carry it out through the Idylls.

"Arthur is intended to be a man in whom the spirit has already conquered and reigns supreme. It is upon this that his kingship rests. His task is to bring his realm into harmony with himself, to build up a spiritual and social order upon which his own character, as the best and highest, shall be impressed. In other words, he works for the uplifting and purification of humanity. It is the problem of civilization. His great enemies in this task are not outward and visible—the heathen—for these he overcomes and expels. But the real foes that oppose him to the end are the evil passions in the hearts of men and women about him. So long as these exist and dominate human lives, the dream of a perfected society must remain unrealized; and when they get the upper hand, even its beginnings will be destroyed. But the conflict is not an airy, abstract strife; it lies in the opposition between those in whom the sensual principle is regnant and those in whom the spiritual principle is regnant, and in the inward struggle of the noble heart against the evil, and of the sinful heart against the good."[4]

Thus, in both secular and sacred literature, the parable serves an artistic and a useful purpose. In the teachings of Jesus it is unique.

The Revelation of John, placed last in the canon of Scripture, though chronology would place it earlier, is one of the most remarkable pieces of literature of all time. Its superscription states the author's purpose: to show "the things which must shortly come

[4] H. van Dyke, "The Poetry of Tennyson," pp. 197-199.

to pass''; and pronounces a benediction upon those who read:

> ''Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand.''
>
> —*Revelation 1: 3.*

The prologue, of which the superscription is a part, is clear; for it claims that Saint John, while on the isle of Patmos for the word of God and the testimony which he held concerning Jesus, heard a trumpet-like voice that bade him write about the future, about the consummation of the divine decrees and the completion of the work of redemption. While he looked and listened he was ''in the Spirit on the Lord's Day'' and he saw the Lord of Glory walking in the midst of seven golden candlesticks and heard his voice, which was as the sound of many waters. This was to John the same person who once walked the earth as the Son of Man. The sound of the voice ravished his ears and the sight dazzled his eyes, for this was a vision of the physically unseen world. Saint John, overshadowed by this more excellent glory, heard the voice of the once dead but now risen and exalted One who is alive forevermore; and this is what he heard:

> ''Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the

angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches."

—*Revelation 1:17-20.*

The reader who wishes to get most out of this apocalypse will pause here; for this is the first vision in this book of symbolic visions. Here Christ is all, is supreme. He is the Priest that makes provision for redemption; and he is the all-powerful King who will conquer all his and his Church's enemies. The imagery of the vision warrants this interpretation. The garment is a priestly garment and the sword is a kingly sword. This Priest King of the vision will bring final triumph to all whom he loved and washed from their sins in his blood.

The message of this vision must come to the seven churches. It is true that the churches are seven in number, but that number represents the Church universal; and it is here that we meet the Church of God on the great broad field of history. Before we make a special study of these churches and their relationships it will be necessary to look at the significance of numbers as found in the literature of the Bible.

The number seven is especially significant: it is always, in Scripture, the number of completeness. There are seven days in the week. God rested on the seventh day. The Year of Jubilee was based upon seven multiplied by seven plus one. Pentecost was reckoned in a similar manner. Indeed, wherever seven is used in the Bible, its meaning is always the same. The book of Revelation is structurally unique; for it is based upon the number seven. To show how artistically complete the book is I shall use Canon Farrar's division. The outline is as follows:

"After the prologue, which occupies the first eight verses, there follow seven sections:

"1. The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia. Ch. 1:9 to 3:22.

"2. The Seven Seals. Chs. 4 to 7.

"3. The Seven Trumpets. Chs. 8 to 11.

"4. The Seven Mystic Figures: The Sun-clothed Woman; the Red Dragon; the Man Child; the Wild Beast from the Sea; the Wild Beast from the Land; the Lamb on Mount Zion; the Son of Man on the Cloud. Chs. 12 to 14.

"5. The Seven Vials. Chs. 15; 16.

"6. The Doom of the Foes of Christ. Chs. 17 to 20.

"7. The Blessed Consummation. Chs. 21:1 to 22:7."[5]

It is noteworthy that in several of these sections the number seven is used. There are seven churches; seven seals; seven mystic figures; seven vials; seven angels. It is not our purpose to make an exegetical study of these numbers, but to point out the fine artistry in which the author shows the Church's conflict and predicts her final triumph. It is, however, within the purview of our study to follow the author's thought as it is developed through the use of beautiful symbolism.

The messages to the seven churches are in some particulars diverse, but in the main the messages are the same. First of all, the Church is shown in a conflict with evil, with contrary forces. This evil is spoken of symbolically; as for example when Balaam's name is mentioned, or when the teaching of the Nicolaitans is referred to. But whether it be the act of Balaam

[5] F. W. Farrar, "The Messages of the Books," pp. 519, 520.

or the precepts of the Nicolaitans they are both set in battle array against the Church.

Another general consideration is in the nature of a charge against the people of the Church. Three times occurs this statement: "I have this against thee." The charge against the church at Ephesus was that it had lost its first love; that against the church at Smyrna was the fact that some were following the teaching of Balaam. A charge of infidelity was made against Thyatira.

The third important part of Christ's message to the churches consisted in the incentives towards faith, fealty, and fellowship in the churches:

"To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God."

—*Revelation 2:7.*

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

—*Revelation 2:10.*

"To him that overcometh, to him will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it."

—*Revelation 2:17.*

"He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne."

—*Revelation 3:21.*

From the main thought of the messages to the church it is evident that the claim of Paul is true:

"Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

—*II Timothy 3:12.*

There is, however, comfort, as there is much encouragement, in the thought that the One who, in the city of God, walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, whose throne is encircled by a restful rainbow, has power to help the Church to triumph over the forces of iniquity and to bring it at last to Immanuel's land to receive the crown of life.

Meantime since these churches are angels or messengers for Christ and since these churches are stars they must shine upon the darkness of earth's night until the daybreak, when the shadows flee away, and until the redeemed Church shall arrive in the city that lies foursquare where the Lamb is the light thereof. For these seven churches it is still the time of faith and conflict, but the author of the book of Revelation asks them to take a look at the city of God. This vision is recorded in chs. 4 and 5.

After the opening of heaven's door the sights that meet the eye are awe-inspiring, magnificent, and sublime. A royal throne is the first part of the vision to appeal to sight. Seated upon this rainbow-circled throne was One whose look was like a jasper and a sardius stone. Seated close to the throne were four and twenty elders, clothed in white raiment and crowned with diadems of gold, who cast their crowns before the throne and offered ascriptions of praise to the Lord, the Creator:

"And out of the throne proceed lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."

—*Revelation 4:5.*

Here appear also four beasts, which truly symbolize redeemed creation which praises the Lord of Life. The next commanding sight is the book sealed with seven seals which only the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lamb of God, can open. This is the Lamb that brought redemption.

The next symbolic scene is that of the opening of the seals. When the first seal was opened there came forth a white horse whose rider had a bow; and who, when he was going to conquer, was given a crown. When the next seal was opened there appeared a red horse, the emblem of "grim-visaged war." The next seal when opened showed a black horse, the symbol of death and famine. When the fourth seal was broken there came forth a pale horse whose rider was death and whom hell accompanied. The opening of the fifth seal revealed, under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. All these were clothed upon with white robes, badges of righteousness. On the opening of the sixth seal there were evidences of judgment, earthquake, darkness, tempest, which made mighty men hide in the dens and rocks of the mountains. Before the opening of the seventh seal there was given a message of unusual comfort:

"Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."

—*Revelation 7:3.*

The seal of God thus put upon them is the seal of safety until judgment be overpast, but this seal is upon those only who have "washed their robes, and

made them white in the blood of the Lamb." When the seventh seal was opened "there followed a silence in heaven about the space of half an hour," Revelation 8:1. All songs ceased; all lightnings and voices and thunders ended and there was a great calm. Standing at attention were seven angels with seven trumpets. There was another angel with a golden censer in his hand. This symbolic censer linked the thought with sacrifice and prayers of saints, whose prayers ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. God answered these prayers that were accompanied with the evening incense and, in answer to the prayers, he bade the seven angels sound their trumpets and they sounded them; and there followed hail and fire and earthquake and plagues and darkness and despair and death—judgments upon the ungodly world. Before the seventh trumpet was sounded there reappeared the strong angel who, in an earlier vision, was presented as the Living Lord who walked among the seven golden candlesticks. This mighty angel, clothed with a cloud, crowned with a rainbow, and with a face like the sun, cried with a loud voice that time should be no longer and that the mystery of God should be finished. The coming of the Strong Angel was a reassurance to the Church, but a terror to the ungodly world. He was verily the fiery-cloudy pillar of Israel's early pilgrim days; for to the world he will come as a judge, but to the Church as the Lord of Life. The Church having been assured of its safety, the seventh trumpet sounded. When it sounded "there followed great voices in heaven, and they said:

"The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever."

—*Revelation 11:15.*

Once again the scene was changed; for the enraptured seer looked upon the temple opened in heaven. Especially did he look upon the Ark of the Covenant. Then followed other symbols: the dragon that represents Satan; a wild beast that is symbolic of a world in opposition to God; another wild beast that represents the false prophets or Antichrist. These were the foes of the woman clothed with the sun who represented the Church. Again appeared the Lamb on Mount Zion, with whom were associated the one hundred and forty-four thousand that sang a new song before the throne; with whom also were associated the angels to do his bidding, one having the everlasting gospel to preach, another proclaiming the fall of Babylon, another announcing the future punishment of those who received the mark of the beast or the number of his name. Then there followed a voice that pronounced a benediction upon those redeemed by the Lamb:

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them."

—*Revelation 11:13.*

Another angel announced that the harvest was ripe. Then another angel proceeded to thrust in his sickle:

"And the angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into

the winepress, the great winepress of the wrath of God."

—*Revelation 14:19.*

The seer saw another sign in heaven, that of the seven last plagues. These seven plagues were poured out from seven bowls and poured upon the throne of the beast, upon the Euphrates, upon earth, upon sea, upon the air. All of these plagues are symbolic of the wrath of God. Upon Babylon, the most malevolent type of opposition to God, divine judgment fell. Then the song of triumph began:

"After these things I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying,
"Hallelujah; Salvation, and glory, and power, belong to our God."

—*Revelation 19:1.*

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying,
"Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth."

—*Revelation 19: 6.*

The seer then looked upon the open heaven:

"And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called The Word of God."

—*Revelation 19:11-13.*

Him the armies of heaven followed on white horses, clothed in linen pure and white. Out of his mouth

went a sword, furbished and glittering, ready to make a slaughter of the enemies of Almighty God. His name, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," indicated the complete and universal character of his power to execute judgment. Immediately in the opened heaven there followed another scene which is best described by quoting *ipsissima verba*:

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great.

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image: they two were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone: and the rest were killed with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, even the sword which came forth out of his mouth: and all the birds were filled with their flesh."

—*Revelation 19:17-21.*

Also another angel appeared, with the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. The chapter in which this occurs is so strategic for the book's meaning that I quote it all:

"And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old ser-

pent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

"And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And

the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire."

—*Revelation, ch. 20.*

Thus we see that Satan was bound for a millennium of years; that the faithful lived and reigned with Christ; that the first resurrection took place at the end of the thousand years; that the Devil was loosed for a season and was then cast into the lake of torment, where were the beast and the false prophet, there to abide forever and ever. In this chapter, too, there is the vision of a great white throne upon which sits God, before whom are gathered the dead, small and great, to be judged according to the things written in the books. The people, however, who were in "the Lamb's book of life" were beyond judgment.

Then come the closing scenes, "a new heaven and a new earth," no more sea. The holy city came down from God out of heaven and the tabernacle of God was with men. Heaven came down to greet the earth and heavenly thoughts and ideas were promised to prevail upon earth for one thousand years. Then in language superb, sublime, and magnificent, is pictured the heavenly Jerusalem. The material symbols of it are glowing and glorious. It would be sheer folly to utter one word in praise of the seer's language. One might as well endeavor to praise the glory of the rainbow or paint the beauty of the lily of the valley as to extol the style of the closing words of the Apocalypse:

"And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: her light was like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal: having a wall great and high; having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that spake with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. And the building of the wall thereof was jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the

Lamb, are the temple thereof. And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there): and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it: and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

"And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.

"And I John am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed me these things. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God.

"And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand. He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still. Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.

"I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.

"He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen."

—*Revelation 21: 9 to 22: 21.*

This apocalypse, this marvelous piece of literature, means nothing definite save to the reader who has

correct knowledge of the symbolic language of the Old Testament; for it is true, as the Church fathers declared, that the New Testament is latent in the Old while the Old Testament is unfolded in the New. Obviously it would not be possible to name all Old Testament symbols made use of in the book of Revelation. Selections must, therefore, be made; and these we take from three sources: numbers, sacrificial symbols, and miscellaneous.

Since the most significant number in the symbolism of the book of Revelation is the number seven, a short comparative study will be illuminating. In the Old Testament this number represents completeness. At the threshold of Bible literature there is the number seven. For there were six days of doing and the next was the rest day, or the Sabbath—seven days in all. The Year of Jubilee is seven multiplied by seven plus one, thus making the joyful year the fiftieth. In Pharaoh's dream there were seven well-favored cattle and seven ill-favored and lean; seven good ears of corn and seven thin and blasted ears. At the bombardment of Jericho the priests carried seven trumpets and the siege lasted seven days. Indeed this number is used scores of times in the Old Testament. Seven is surely the number of completeness. The term, seven churches, in the book of Revelation represents the Church universal; the seven angels represent the universal Church bringing its complete message of truth concerning the Lamb; the seven lamps represent the Spirit of God; the seven vials represent the comprehensive and complete nature of God's judgment upon a wicked world.

In Holy Scripture there are other numbers that

are symbolic. Elijah, on Mount Carmel, in making a test as to the power of Baal, used the number four significantly. To show this use I quote the passage:

"And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou hast followed the Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Asherah four hundred, that eat at Jezebel's table.

"So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. And Elijah came near unto all the people, and said, How long go ye limping between the two sides? if Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, am left a prophet of Jehovah; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of Jehovah: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

"And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped about the altar which was made. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah

mocked them, and said, Cry aloud; for he is a god: either he is musing, or he is gone aside, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it was so, when midday was past, that they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening oblation; but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

"And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me; and all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of Jehovah that was thrown down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of Jehovah came, saying, Israel shall be thy name. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of Jehovah; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four jars with water, and pour it on the burnt-offering, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time; and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time; and they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening oblation, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, O Jehovah, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that thou, Jehovah, art God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of Jehovah fell, and consumed the burnt-offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it,

they fell on their faces: and they said, Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God."

—*I Kings 18:17-39.*

Ezekiel, in the first part of his recorded prophecy, names and describes four living creatures. In The Proverbs also "four" is mentioned several times:

"There are four things which are little upon the earth,
But they are exceeding wise:
The ants are a people not strong,
Yet they provide their food in the summer;
The conies are but a feeble folk,
Yet make they their houses in the rocks;
The locusts have no king,
Yet go they forth all of them by bands;
The lizard taketh hold with her hands,
Yet is she in kings' palaces."

—*Proverbs 30: 24-28.*

In the book of Revelation this number is used, and it is used symbolically, of the creature in contradistinction to the Creator. Hence in this relationship four horses are named. Because of the significance of these horses and the horsemen the passage is given in full:

"And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon had a bow; and there was given unto him a crown: and he came forth conquering, and to conquer.

"And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come. And another horse came forth, a red horse: and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

"And when he opened the third seal, I heard the

third living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a black horse; and he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand. And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, A measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measures of barley for a shilling; and the oil and the wine hurt thou not.

"And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and he that sat upon him, his name was Death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth."

—*Revelation 6:2-8.*

In this same book the author speaks of four beasts. After the Lamb had opened the sealed book the author says:

"And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth."

—*Revelation 5:6.*

The number twelve is vitally a part of complete nationalism for the Jews. The sons of Jacob were twelve in number. In Israel there were twelve tribes. During the nomadic experiences of the Israelites they came to Elim where there were twelve wells of water. When for representative reasons the high priest's breastplate was made it contained twelve precious stones. The description of this breastplate is so beautiful that it is included in this narrative:

"And thou shalt make a breastplate of judgment, the work of the skilful workman; like the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, shalt thou make it. Foursquare it shall be and double; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span the breadth thereof. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, four rows of stones: a row of sardius, topaz, and carbuncle shall be the first row; and the second row an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; and the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be enclosed in gold in their settings. And the stones shall be according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names; like the engravings of a signet, every one according to his name, they shall be for the twelve tribes."

—*Exodus 28:15-21.*

Besides symbolic numbers, persons and places are similarly used. Lamb is a symbolic instrument; for in the book of Exodus the paschal lamb is the symbol of Israel's spiritual emancipation. In order to have a better understanding of this symbolism we quote the part of Exodus which gives an account of the provision for Israel's redemption:

"And Jehovah spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household: and if the household be too little for a lamb, then shall he and his neighbor next unto his house take one according to the number of the souls; according to every man's eating ye shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year

old: ye shall take it from the sheep, or from the goats: and ye shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at even. And they shall take of the blood, and put it on the two side-posts and on the lintel, upon the houses wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roast with fire; its head with its legs and with the inwards thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; but that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it: with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is Jehovah's passover. For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am Jehovah. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

—*Exodus 12:1-13.*

In this passover we reach the very life blood of the Jewish religion. A supernatural intervention gave efficacy to the body and blood of the slain sacrificial lamb. Disregard and disbelieve this Hebrew creed which is based on God's way of peace and salvation and Old Testament religion ceases to be. The destroying angel passed by only when the blood of the lamb was shed and sprinkled. The blood saved from death. In the book of Revelation the Lamb is upon the throne, or walking among the seven golden candle-

sticks, or opening the sealed book, or receiving ascriptions of praise:

"Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

—*Revelation 5:12.*

The Lamb is the one that makes spiritual liberty a possibility. Then, too, the crowning glory of heaven is associated with the once slain, but now triumphant Lamb of God:

"And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb."

—*Revelation 21: 23.*

He is the associated ruler of the world; for he shares the throne with Jehovah:

"And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

—*Revelation 22:1.*

"And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him."

—*Revelation 22: 3.*

Connected with the work of atonement the altar is mentioned, the altar of sacrifice. Associated with the altar there is the priest. In the vision in which John describes the "one like unto a son of man" appears the one forever associated with all that the altar suggests. He is "clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle." A proper Old Testament detailed study

makes clear that the white robe and the girdle about the breasts are the manifestations of a priest actively engaged in the work of redemption.

For an understanding of other symbols in Revelation there is but one thing to do; namely, to study the Old Testament use of the terms in their setting and significance. As a study in method I present a few of these Old Testament terms.

The trumpet plays a not unimportant part upon the great apocalyptic stage; hence the need to know its meaning. The sound of the trumpet is heard at the time of the giving of the Commandments to Israel:

"And all the people perceived the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off."

—*Exodus 20:18.*

After Sinai came the beginning of the march to Canaan. What the trumpet meant for that journey the record shows:

"And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver; of beaten work shalt thou make them: and thou shalt use them for the calling of the congregation, and for the journeying of the camps. And when they shall blow them, all the congregation shall gather themselves unto thee at the door of the tent of meeting. And if they blow but one, then the princes, the heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee. And when ye blow an alarm, the camps that lie on the east side shall take their journey. And when ye blow an alarm the second time, the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey: they shall blow an alarm for their journeys. But when the assembly is to be gathered to-

gether, ye shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm. And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets; and they shall be to you for a statute for ever throughout your generations. And when ye go to war in your land against the adversary that oppresseth you, then ye shall sound an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before Jehovah your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies. Also in the day of your gladness, and in your set feasts, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; and they shall be to you for a memorial before your God: I am Jehovah your God."

—*Numbers 10: 1-10.*

At Sinai one trumpet was heard: for the Canaanward march two trumpets, silver trumpets, were used, both for the convening of the assembly and for the journeying of the camps.

The trumpet was used in righteous war; for when Gideon, that courageous epic hero, sent his noble three hundred out against myriads of Midianites he armed each of them with a trumpet to blow withal. Here the trumpet is associated with a military victory. By Ezekiel the trumpet is used for warning. Zechariah looks upon Jehovah as the great trumpeter; for he says:

"And Jehovah shall be seen over them; and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning; and the Lord Jehovah will blow the trumpet, and will go with whirlwinds of the south."

—*Zechariah 9:14.*

From this brief and not complete review of the place of the trumpet in Israel's life it is evident that

it is appropriately used as a symbol in the continued fortunes of the complete Church.

The seal is another symbol in the Apocalypse. What is the seal? Let the following paragraph answer:

"In the midst of all this the safety of the righteous is secured, and that in a way, as compared with the way of the Old Testament, proportionate to the superior greatness of their privileges. They are marked as God's, not by a man out of the city, but by an *angel ascending from the sunrising,* the quarter whence proceeds that light of day which gilds the loftiest mountain tops and penetrates into the darkest recesses of the valleys. This angel, with his *great voice,* is probably the Lord himself appearing by his angel. The mark impressed upon the righteous is more than a mere mark: it is a *seal*—a seal similar to that with which Christ was 'sealed';[6] the seal which in the Song of Songs the bride desires as the token of the Bridegroom's love to her alone: 'Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm';[7] the seal which expresses the thought, 'The Lord knoweth them that are his.'[8] Finally, this seal is impressed *on the forehead,* on that part of the body on which the high priest of Israel wore the golden plate, with its inscription, 'Holiness to the Lord.' Such a seal, manifest to the eyes of all, was a witness to all that they who bore it were acknowledged by the Redeemer before all, even before his Father and the holy angels."[9] [10]

Babylon is used symbolically. That ancient city carried the people of Jerusalem into captivity and

[6] John 6:27.
[7] Song of Solomon 8:6.
[8] II Timothy 2:19.
[9] Compare Luke 12:8.
[10] R. Milligan, "Revelation," in "The Expositor's Bible," pp. 115, 116. Published by Doubleday, Doran & Company. Used by permission.

mocked them in their captivity by saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." In his symbolic language John shows that Babylon will fall and that, undisturbed, the Church of the New Jerusalem will sing the symphony of Zion redeemed; and they will do this because "the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth." Alleluia!

As a piece of literature the book of Revelation is supremely sublime. It is thus sublime because of its awe-inspiring power. As the greatness of the towering mountain makes it sublime so the high-reaching thought of the Apocalypse makes it sublime.

One of my "school days" memories of Goldsmith fits here, and I use it to help to set forth symbolically my feelings concerning this great unsealed book:

"As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,—
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head." [11]

A childhood remembrance from Byron may not inaptly be quoted here:

"Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;
They crowned him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow." [12]

The author's firm grasp upon the depths of religious thought lends not a little fascination to his book. In his handling of such thought he reveals the well-reasoned-out moral convictions of a scholar and an

[11] Goldsmith, in "The Deserted Village."
[12] Byron, in "Manfred."

artist. He has the sure touch of an artist, a great artist, and he always knows where he is going. His thought challenges the thinking of his readers and his psychic power profoundly appeals to them.

The technique of his book is unique and strangely original. Though he found terms and usages in the Old Testament, yet like a good scholar and artist he investigated, classified, and interpreted his material. His diction, his imagery, his parallelism are alike good. The symbols and the ideas symbolized are so beautifully blended that, like the colors of the rainbow, it is not possible to tell where one color begins and another ends. An example of this colorful blending is found in the interchange of thought between Christ and the Church. Christ says: "He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly." The Church's antiphonal is: "Amen: come, Lord Jesus." Both these quotations are in Revelation 22:20. A great commentator sums up this lovely expression of mutual desire:

"Jesus has spoken; and the Church replies, 'Amen: come, Lord Jesus.' Amen to all that the Lord has promised; Amen to the thought of sin and sorrow banished, of wounded hearts healed, of tears of affliction wiped away, of the sting taken from death and victory from the grave, of darkness dissipated forever, of the light of the eternal day. Surely it cannot come too soon. 'Why is His chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?'[13] 'Yea; I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.'"[14]

[13] Judges 5:28.

[14] R. Milligan, "Revelation," in "The Expositor's Bible," p. 389. Published by Doubleday, Doran & Company. Used by permission.

The book of Revelation begins with a promise of blessing and ends with a benediction. "Blessed is he that readeth" and "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints" unite in carrying out the command: "Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand."

The reverent scholar will ever seek to know the message of this sublime piece of literature. Secular literature does not take a place by the side of this book; for even the thought of Milton flies not so high, nor remains so long on the wing, as does the thought of the Patmos exile.

CHAPTER IX

THE BIBLE TRANSLATED

In this part of our study it is necessary to remind the reader that what is usually called the English Bible is but a translation of the Bible into the English language. It is, therefore, obvious that the excellence of one translation cannot be determined by comparing it with another translation, but by comparing each Anglo-Saxon or English translation with the Bible in its original tongues.

To the scholar it is obvious that a close adherence to original documents has produced a Bible diction that is in no sense the creation of the development of the English language. On the contrary, Bible diction has in no small measure shaped the style of secular writers. It has been able to do this because the translations are the result of earnest studies in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and such cognate languages as shed any light upon the manuscripts translated. This earnest study has maintained a steady style through the centuries. Even a survey of style from Anglo-Saxon days down to our own day convinces the student that there is very little change. However, before making that survey, it seems necessary to give a short account of the versions or manuscripts used.

First of all, and here I quote, "Hundreds of Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament are known to

exist, their numbers ever increasing as manuscript cemeteries connected with the old synagogues in Cairo and in the East yield their treasures to searching explorers."[1]

From original Hebrew manuscripts a translation was made into Greek and for some time called the Vulgate, but because of ecclesiastic reasons the name was changed to the Septuagint. The name, however, is of value only in so far as it identifies this very important piece of work, which for several centuries was the Bible used by the Greek-speaking Jews, and was used by the Messiah in his bodily residence upon earth.

The next important ancient translation is the Peshito, or Syriac version. This version was closer to the Hebrew than was the Septuagint though the latter influenced subsequent translations more than did the former.

Next in historical importance is the Latin Vulgate, whose history is well set forth in the following paragraph:

"As numerous corruptions crept into the old Latin version, Jerome in 382 set to work to revise that translation. His first edition of the Psalter was a simple revision of the Itala. The revision is known as the Psalterium Romanum, and was used up to the time of Pius V in the Roman Church. Portions of it are yet to be found in the missal and breviary. But the work was done too hastily to be satisfactory. Jerome next revised many portions of the Old Testament version after Origen's Hexaplar text of the LXX. Of that revision only the Psalter and The Book of Job are extant. The revised translation of The Psalms is known as the Psalterium Gallicanum, because it came

[1] G. L. Robinson, "Where Did We Get Our Bible?" p. 107.

into common use in Gaul. Jerome then proceeded to translate The Psalms directly from Hebrew, and extended his translation to the other books of the Old Testament, inclusive of some of the Apocryphal books. The work was completed between A. D. 390 and 405. Jerome's revision of The Psalms known as the Gallican had, however, obtained so firm a footing that that version was incorporated into the Vulgate, and not the translation from the Hebrew. Jerome's translation of the Psalter from the Hebrew has been separately edited by P. de Lagarde (Leipzig, 1874), and it is contained in the *Liber Psalmorum Heb. atque Latinus ab Hieronymo ex Hebraeo conversus, consociata opera ediderunt C. de Tischendorf, S. Baer, F. Delitzsch. Lipsiae.* 1874. It is also to be found in Bagster's *Biblia Ecclesiae Polyglotta.* 1843." [2]

This Vulgate and the other main sources furnish the foundation upon which the translations of the Old Testament are built.

Greek manuscripts are the foundation for translations of the New Testament. Of Greek manuscripts three are important: Codex Vaticanus, now in the Vatican library at Rome; Codex Siniaticus, once in the Imperial library at St. Petersburg; and the Codex Alexandrinus, in custody of the British Museum. These three have been much used in translating the Greek of the New Testament into English.

In this short account of Bible translations into English only the main facts can be mentioned. One of these facts is that the Anglo-Saxon versions are based upon the Latin Vulgate. Most of these translations were fragmentary and were intended not for the

[2] C. H. H. Wright, "An Introduction to the Old Testament," pp. 65, 66.

people, the laity, but for the clergy and their attendants.

In the British Museum there is a copy of the Gospel writings translated into Anglo-Saxon. This work was done by Bishop Egbert, who died in A. D. 735. King Alfred the Great translated some parts of the Bible into the everyday language of his country. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that he prefixed his translation of the Ten Commandments to the laws of England. There are several other translations or parts of translations into the ancient language of England. Six of these are translations of the Gospels; and one of them is that of several books of the Old Testament. This Old Testament work was done by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The first major translation of the Bible into English was made by John Wycliffe and his associate, Nicolas of Hereford. This version was made not for the clergy but for the common people, the people of England. They used the Latin Vulgate, whose ancestry we have named on another page. It has been my belief that this translation has had not a little to do in shaping the form of later translations and in influencing English diction. This same view is stated in a recent book from which I now quote:

"Wycliffe's translation did more than any other one thing to create and unify the English language." [3]

Tyndale's work is the next comprehensive attempt in Bible translation. His work was a difficult, delicate, and dangerous task, but with the consistency of a great soul sustained by an abiding faith he kept at

[3] G. L. Robinson, "Where Did We Get Our Bible?" p. 130.

the work until he put into English all of the New Testament, the Pentateuch, and The Book of Jonah. These, thanks to the invention of printing, he published while in Europe. Besides these published parts, and while in prison near Brussels, he translated nine other Old Testament books, Joshua to Chronicles inclusive. The manuscripts of these nine books were used by a later translator. Tyndale advanced a step in the work of translation; for instead of the Latin Vulgate he went directly to the Hebrew and Greek sources. Though he used these original sources his translation differs only a little from that of his illustrious predecessor, Wycliffe, who used the Vulgate, in which there was a mixture of indebtedness. There is a high degree of correlation in the translations of Wycliffe and Tyndale and the correlation is obvious and demonstrable. This fact reveals at least three things: the persistence of the basic element of Anglo-Saxon; the honest adherence of the translator to the language translated; and the general accuracy of the Vulgate to its ultimate source, the Hebrew manuscripts.

The sixteenth century saw many translations, the most important of which are Coverdale's translation; the "Great Bible"; the "Geneva Bible"; and the "Bishops' Bible." The first of these is a completion of the unfinished work of Tyndale. This is the first complete translation of the Bible printed in English. It is important to remember this epoch-making date, 1539, as that of the time when the Bible, the Book of books, was sent forth on its printed career. Henry VIII authorized it to be sent out in God's name to the people. This version, because of its facile and

felicitous phrasing, has exerted an influence for beauty of expression upon subsequent versions.

In 1539 there appeared the version known as the "Great Bible." This is only another revision, but with more attention to original sources than that given to the making of any previous versions. It was authorized by Henry VIII.

Another translation was made at Geneva, where were some involuntary exiles who had escaped the wrath of the queen with the unenviable sobriquet, "Bloody Mary." This translation was made directly from Hebrew and Greek sources, but it was made in the atmosphere of a fierce spirit of liberty. Because of its supposed leanings towards Calvinism another translation was made in the interests of the Church of England and called the "Bishops' Bible." It seems peculiar that this translation should have been made in view of the fact that the Seventeenth Article of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England out-Calvins the famous Frenchman who wrote the "Institutes."

The "Great Bible" was revised in the interest of the bishops of the English Church—hence the name of the new version. This translation was based upon Hebrew and Greek and it was made in a noncontroversial spirit. From it the Apocryphal books were excluded.

The next translation, almost an immortal one, was the 1611 version in the reign of King James I of England and VI of Scotland. About fifty of the most learned linguists of the realm were appointed to do the work. The physical organization of the program was complete and the excellent spirit that permeated

the entire work produced that incomparably beautiful diction which when read aloud is like music falling upon the ear and like the appeal which music makes when it is stealing into the soul. This language music is like the "lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice"; for its music has a sweet melody that lingers in the memory. This sweetness which the soul feels is the result not only of a scholarly acquaintance with the original languages of the Bible but also of the unusual enthusiasm which the translators brought to their pleasant task. These translators were the possessors of college diplomas, but they, as men of God, carried much of the spirit of truth which they infused into that translation which reads well aloud, because it is of all the translations the most musical. Since this version of 1611, so free from ecclesiastic coloring and, therefore, so much of a real translation, has been the real language of the English-speaking world for more than two centuries it seems not irrelevant to quote here a passage from a letter sent by King James to Bishop Bancroft and by him communicated to the other bishops and their clergy who were skilled in the original languages of the Scriptures. I quote that part of the letter which has to do with immediate business of translation:

"Furthermore we require you to remove all our bishops to inform themselves of all such learned men within their several dioceses as having especial skill in the Hebrew and Greek tongues, have taken pains, in their private studies of the Scriptures, for the clearing of any obscurities either in the Hebrew or in the Greek, or touching any difficulties or mistakings in the former English translation, which we have

now commanded to be thoroughly viewed and amended, and thereupon to write unto them, earnestly charging them, and signifying our pleasure therein, that they send such their observations either to Mr. Lively, our Hebrew reader in Cambridge, or to Dr. Harding, our Hebrew reader in Oxford, or to Dr. Andrews, Dean of Westminster, to be imparted to the rest of their several companies; so that our said intended translation may have the help and furtherance of all our principal learned men within this our kingdom. Given under our signet at our palace of Westm. the two and twentieth of July, in the second year of our reign of England, France, and Ireland, and of Scotland XXXVII."[4]

In spite of the relatively few changes that had been made in the various translations of the Bible inclusive of the King James Version of 1611, it seemed good to the more thoughtful scholars of the latter part of the nineteenth century to attempt another revision; and it seemed not only good but necessary because of the number of documents not available to the earlier translators, and because of the linguistic changes in some of the terms used in the earlier versions. Accordingly at an ecclesiastical conclave in 1870 a program was organized which resulted in the Revised Version of 1885. For fifteen years approximately one hundred English and American scholars worked with devotion and diligence not to produce a new English style but to translate the Bible with accuracy, truth, and beauty. It is interesting to take a peep at these scholars as they are trying rightly to translate the Word of Truth:

[4] A. W. Pollard, "Records of the English Bible," pp. 332, 333.

"And now let us watch the Revisers at their work. Before each man lies a sheet with a column of the Authorized Version printed in the middle, leaving a wide margin on either side for suggested alterations, the left hand for changes in the Greek text, and the right for those referring to the English rendering. These sheets are already covered with notes, the result of each Reviser's private study of the passage beforehand. After prayers and reading of the minutes, the chairman reads over for the company part of the passage on the printed sheet (Matthew 1:18-25), and asks for any suggested emendations." [5]

This fine revision has not had an enthusiastic reception either in England or in the United States of America. There is a potent reason for its not being rapidly received in America, but that is another story. In England, however, one could wish for it a kindlier welcome. I am indebted to an Irish scholar for a pertinent paragraph. Of the Revised Version he says:

"Its reception has been disappointing. The public have largely failed to appreciate its great merits and its great value. But perhaps it is too soon yet to judge. For many years after its first appearance our present Authorized Version had to encounter fierce opposition and severe criticism—Broughton, the greatest Hebrew scholar of the day, wrote to King James that he 'would rather be torn asunder by wild horses than allow such a version to be imposed on the Church'—and yet in the end it won its way and attained a position that no version before or since in any country has attained." [6]

In this Revised Version there are some literary advantages not found in preceding translations. There

[5] J. P. Smyth, "How We Got Our Bible," p. 139.
[6] J. P. Smyth, "How We Got Our Bible," p. 144.

is, for example, the use of a poetic technique that catches the eye of the reader. This is true for Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Lamentations and for the poetic parts of those books ordinarily considered prose.

It is a delight to meet the songs of Saint Luke in their poetic form. In this form the general reader meets the Magnificat, the Benedictus, and the Gloria in Excelsis, and he comes to appreciate not only their spiritual power, but their artistic beauty.

Why is the Revised Version not used in America? The answer is the American Standard Edition. This revision is really a continuation of the English revision; for the American committee perpetuated itself and carried on its scholarly work until in 1900 there appeared the new translation. This new translation shares in all the beauties of all earlier revisions and translations. In this work of American scholarship there are some improvements, especially the consistent translation of that divine name which meant so much to the Jewish heart, the name "Jehovah." This consistent method of naming words that truly represent the Hebrew and the Greek is a method that makes a strong appeal to the best scholarship. Many other examples could be given were there space. This is the last great translation; while not so musical as the Authorized Version it is certainly more accurate. It is a real honor to American scholarship.

Besides these great translations there have been many other versions, many of which are individual in nature. We name a few of the more prominent. Dr. Weymouth's translation of the New Testament, Dr. Ballantine's translation of the New Testament, and Dr. Moffatt's translation of both Old and New Testa-

ments are rather well known, but these and others like them can never in a scholarly sense equal the aggregate knowledge and erudition of England's and America's best scholarship.

Good translation is a work of art, for it is more than a piece of mechanics; it is more than skillful phrasing; it is more than idiomatic expression; it is the putting of the thought of an author into the new dress of another language. This transfer of thought has been better done for the writers of the Bible than for any other author or authors in the history of writing.

CHAPTER X

APOCRYPHAL LITERATURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Apocryphal books of the Old Testament, so named by the Church fathers because of a supposed hidden meaning, make up a body of literature that Biblical scholars cannot overlook; for an acquaintance with them is necessary adequately to understand the vast historic period between the Prophet Malachi and the Evangelist Matthew. This period is known as inter-Biblical.

Ecclesiastically these books, fourteen in number, have had a mutable career. They were not admitted to the Hebrew canonical list, probably because they were for the most part not handed down in the Hebrew language. When, however, the Alexandrine scholars, makers of the Septuagint version of the Bible, examined them, they listed them with the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. In this Septuagint they remained, though not without challenge, until the Roman Catholic Church at the Council of Trent, 1546, approved them, with the exception of I and II Esdras and the Prayer of Manasses. On the other hand the Reformation Churches, while they approved of them as useful reading, yet rejected them as authority in matters religious; and the Reformation

scholars rejected them not because of "hidden" meanings, but because, in their judgment, the books were not inspired. In spite, however, of differing theological views concerning them they are of great value, from the point of view both of history and of literature. No one can lay just claim to a knowledge of the world's greatest classic if he remain unacquainted with the Old Testament Apocrypha.

These books, like all ancient Hebrew literature, are basically religious. This fact alone would put them in the highest class, would make them classics. A selection from each of the books [1] will show this deep and abiding religious feeling:

"And Josias held the feast of the passover in Jerusalem unto his Lord, and offered the passover the fourteenth day of the first month; having set the priests according to their daily courses, being arrayed in long garments, in the temple of the Lord."

—*I Esdras 1:1, 2.*

"Hear, O ye my beloved, saith the Lord: behold, the days of trouble are at hand, but I will deliver you from the same."

—*II Esdras 16:74.*

"Then Raguel praised God, and said, O God, thou art worthy to be praised with all pure and holy praise; therefore let thy saints praise thee with all thy creatures; and let all thine angels and thine elect praise thee for ever. Thou art to be praised, for thou hast made me joyful; and that is not come to me which I suspected; but thou hast dealt with us according to thy great mercy."

—*Tobit 8:15, 16.*

[1] The Authorized Version.

"Then every man of Israel cried to God with great fervency, and with great vehemency did they humble their souls."

—*Judith 4: 9.*

"Hear my prayer, and be merciful unto thine inheritance: turn our sorrow into joy, that we may live, O Lord, and praise thy name: and destroy not the mouths of them that praise thee, O Lord. All Israel in like manner cried most earnestly unto the Lord, because their death was before their eyes."

—*Esther 13:17, 18.*

"Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth: think of the Lord with a good (heart,) and in simplicity of heart seek him. For he will be found of them that tempt him not; and sheweth himself unto such as do not distrust him. For froward thoughts separate from God: and his power, when it is tried, reproveth the unwise. For into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter; nor dwell in the body that is subject unto sin. For the holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in. For wisdom is a loving spirit; and will not acquit a blasphemer of his words: for God is witness of his reins, and a true beholder of his heart, and a hearer of his tongue. For the Spirit of the Lord filleth the world: and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice. Therefore he that speaketh unrighteous things cannot be hid: neither shall vengeance, when it punisheth, pass by him. For inquisition shall be made into the counsels of the ungodly: and the sound of his words shall come unto the Lord for the manifestation of his wicked deeds. For the ear of jealousy heareth all things: and the noise of murmurings is not hid. Therefore beware of murmuring, which is unprofitable; and refrain your tongue from backbiting: for there is no word so secret, that shall go for nought: and the mouth that belieth slayeth the

soul. Seek not death in the error of your life: and pull not upon yourselves destruction with the works of your hands. For God made not death: neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living. For he created all things, that they might have their being: and the generations of the world were healthful; and there is no poison of destruction in them, nor the kingdom of death upon the earth: (for righteousness is immortal:) but ungodly men with their works and words called it to them: for when they thought to have it their friend, they consumed to nought, and made a covenant with it, because they are worthy to take part with it."

—*The Wisdom of Solomon, ch. 1.*

"My son, gather instruction from thy youth up: so shalt thou find wisdom till thine old age. Come unto her as one that ploweth and soweth, and wait for her good fruits: for thou shalt not toil much in labouring about her, but thou shalt eat of her fruits right soon. She is very unpleasant to the unlearned: he that is without understanding will not remain with her. She will lie upon him as a mighty stone of trial; and he will cast her from him ere it be long. For wisdom is according to her name, and she is not manifest unto many. Give ear, my son, receive my advice, and refuse not my counsel, and put thy feet into her fetters, and thy neck into her chain. Bow down thy shoulder, and bear her, and be not grieved with her bonds. Come unto her with thy whole heart, and keep her ways with all thy power. Search, and seek, and she shall be made known unto thee: and when thou hast got hold of her, let her not go. For at the last thou shalt find her rest, and that shall be turned to thy joy. Then shall her fetters be a strong defence for thee, and her chains a robe of glory. For there is a golden ornament upon her, and her bands are purple lace. Thou shalt put her on as a robe of honour, and shalt put her about thee as a crown of joy. My son, if thou wilt, thou shalt be taught: and

if thou wilt apply thy mind, thou shalt be prudent. If thou love to hear, thou shalt receive understanding: and if thou bow thine ear, thou shalt be wise. Stand in the multitude of the elders; and cleave unto him that is wise. Be willing to hear every godly discourse; and let not the parables of understanding escape thee. And if thou seest a man of understanding, get thee betimes unto him, and let thy foot wear the steps of his door. Let thy mind be upon the ordinances of the Lord, and meditate continually in his commandments: he shall establish thine heart, and give thee wisdom at thine own desire."

—*Ecclesiasticus 6:18-37.*

"O Lord Almighty, God of Israel, the soul in anguish, the troubled spirit, crieth unto thee."

—*Baruch 3:1.*

"Blessed art thou, O Lord God of our fathers: and to be praised and exalted above all for ever. And blessed is thy glorious and holy name: and to be praised and exalted above all for ever. Blessed art thou in the temple of thine holy glory: and to be praised and glorified above all for ever. Blessed art thou that beholdest the depths, and sittest upon the cherubims: and to be praised and exalted above all for ever. Blessed art thou on the glorious throne of thy kingdom: and to be praised and glorified above all for ever. Blessed art thou in the firmament of heaven: and above all to be praised and glorified for ever."

—*The Song of Three Holy Children 1: 29-34.*

"Then Susanna cried out with a loud voice, and said, O everlasting God, that knowest the secrets, and knowest all things before they be: thou knowest that they have borne false witness against me, and, behold, I must die; whereas I never did such things as these men have maliciously invented against me. And the Lord heard her voice."

—*History of Susanna 1:42-44.*

"Then said Daniel unto the king, I will worship the Lord my God: for he is the living God."

—*Bel and the Dragon 1: 25.*

"Therefore I will praise thee for ever all the days of my life: for all the powers of the heavens do praise thee, and thine is the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

—*Prayer of Manasses,* last verse.

"Then cried they with a loud voice toward heaven, saying, What shall we do with these, and whither shall we carry them away? For thy sanctuary is trodden down and profaned, and thy priests are in heaviness, and brought low. And, lo, the heathen are assembled together against us to destroy us: what things they imagine against us, thou knowest. How shall we be able to stand against them, except thou, O God, be our help?"

—*I Maccabees 3: 50-53*

"Therefore in his prayer he said after this manner; O Lord, thou didst send thine angel in the time of Ezekias king of Judea, and didst slay in the host of Sennacherib an hundred fourscore and five thousand."

—*II Maccabees 15: 22.*

These selections cannot be entirely convincing in themselves, but when read in their contexts—and the student is expected to do this—they will show that the books of which they are parts lean upon religious ideas.

I continue this chapter by pointing out some of the literary beauties of the Apocrypha. Here are many passages of an excellent poetic spirit. I quote a passage that is strong in psychic appeal and sublime in the grandness of its rhythmic thought:

"For wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me: for in her is an understanding spirit, holy, one only, manifold, subtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man, stedfast, sure, free from care, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure, and most subtil, spirits. For wisdom is more moving than any motion: she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty: therefore can no defiled thing fall into her. For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness. And being but one, she can do all things: and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new: and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God, and prophets. For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom. For she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of stars: being compared with the light, she is found before it. For after this cometh night: but vice shall not prevail against wisdom."

—*The Wisdom of Solomon 7: 22-30.*

From the point of view of literature there are two historical romances which take a high place in their own realm of artistic thought, Judith and Tobit; the greater of these is Judith. The heroine in this political romance is the Joan of Arc of antiquity; for she came to the kingdom in a crisis and at a strategic moment and thus became the deliverer of her people. Both in song and in painting has Judith been celebrated. In his comments on Sandro's painting, Ruskin, in his "Mornings in Florence," is quite happy as

he describes Judith. We give all the descriptive paragraph:

"Now, as in many other cases of noble history, Apocryphal and other, I do not in the least care how far the literal facts are true. The conception of facts, and the idea of Jewish womanhood, are there, grand and real as a marble statue—possession for all ages. And you will feel, after you have read this piece of history, or epic poetry, with honorable care, that there is somewhat more to be thought of and pictured in Judith than painters have mostly found it in them to show you; that she is not merely the Jewish Delilah to the Assyrian Samson; but the mightiest, purest, brightest type of high passion in severe womanhood offered to our human memory. Sandro's picture is but slight; but it is true to her, and the only one I know that is; and after writing out these verses, you will see why he gives her that swift, peaceful motion, while you read in her face only sweet solemnity of dreaming thought. 'My people delivered, and by my hand; and God has been gracious to His handmaid!' The triumph of Miriam over a fallen host, the fire of exulting mortal life in an immortal hour, the purity and severity of a guardian angel—all are here; and as her servant follows, carrying indeed the head, but invisible—(a mere thing to be carried—no more to be so much as thought of)—she looks only at her mistress, with intense, servile, watchful love. Faithful, not in these days of fear only, but hitherto in all her life, and afterwards forever."

Her praise in music is equally well known.

Besides romance there are various literary types: historico-prophetic, as in I and II Esdras and Esther; purely historical, as in I and II Maccabees; appendices to canonical books, like Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasses, The Song of the

Three Holy Children, and Baruch; wisdom literature, as The Wisdom of Solomon, and Ecclesiasticus.

In these strategically important books the authors have laid under contribution, and that amply, both life and nature, the two chief sources of information and inspiration.

The books, too, are garnished by beautiful figures of speech. The author of The Wisdom of Solomon, speaking of wisdom, says:

"For she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of stars: being compared with the light, she is found before it."

—*The Wisdom of Solomon 7: 29.*

Ecclesiasticus says:

"The root of wisdom is to fear the Lord, and the branches thereof are long life."

—*Ecclesiasticus 1: 20.*

Moreover these books are characterized by an unusual degree of genuine eloquence—not wordy eloquence, but thought eloquence—that force which convinces the reader that the author has reserve power, psychic force.

I conclude this short account of the Old Testament Apocryphal books by asking the student to observe their unique literary service to the Old Testament by what they reflect of those canonical books, and by the manner in which they have entered into the writings known as the New Testament.

"In the item of scholarship both broadness and thoroughness require us to have a knowledge of the Old Testament Apocrypha, if we are to deal knowingly with the New Testament, the Book of Authority

in our religion. There are in the Apocrypha *preludings* of the high faith and teaching of the New Testament. While the Apocrypha is not directly quoted in the New Testament, yet there are many examples of *parallelisms* between the two, which abundantly show that the writers of the New Testament were fully acquainted with the Apocrypha and found it helpful. These parallelisms are found in The Epistle to the Hebrews, and in the writings of James, and Paul, and John. In the doctrine of *divine wisdom,* as contained in the Apocrypha, there are many premonitions of the Fourth Gospel. This is seen by comparing the Gospel of John 1:1-14 with The *Wisdom of Solomon,* seventh and ninth chapters inclusive. Doctor Westcott calls attention to the fact that the writer of the Epistle to the Ephesians was helped in describing the Christian's armor, Ephesians 6:13-17, by *Wisdom* 5:15-22. The Christian's armor is something like the armor of God himself."[2]

The armor of God is thus described:

"But the righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand: for with his right hand shall he cover them, and with his arm shall he protect them. He shall take to him his jealousy for complete armour, and make the creature his weapon for the revenge of his enemies. He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate, and true judgment instead of an helmet. He shall take holiness for an invincible shield. His severe wrath shall he sharpen for a sword, and the world shall fight with him against the unwise. Then shall the right aiming thunderbolts go abroad; and from the clouds, as from a well drawn bow, shall they fly

[2] D. Gregg, "Between the Testaments," p. 93.

to the mark. And hailstones full of wrath shall be cast as out of a stone bow, and the water of the sea shall rage against them, and the floods shall cruelly drown them."

—*The Wisdom of Solomon 5:15-22.*

Note: I do not discuss the New Testament Apocrypha because they are of negligible value.

APPENDIX

THE following questions and topics for special investigation will, we think, be of much value to the student.

CHAPTER I

1. What is the origin of the term "Bible"?
2. What is the meaning of the term "Testament"?

TOPICS

1. The original languages of the Scriptures.
2. The Septuagint.

CHAPTER II

1. How does Moulton classify the historical books of the Bible?
2. Is Biblical history unique?

TOPIC

Biblical history as literature.

CHAPTER III

1. What is poetry?
2. What is the soul of poetry?
3. What is the basic structure of Hebrew poetry?
4. Name some attributes of poetry.
5. Why do the poets of the Bible look so much to nature for inspiration?

TOPICS

1. The interpretations of The Song of Solomon.
2. The thought divisions of The Psalms.

CHAPTER IV

1. What are some of the names applied to the prophets?
2. How many writing prophets are there? (*a*) major? (*b*) minor?
3. What literary forms are used by the prophets?
4. What is meant by symbolic prophecy?

TOPICS

1. Imagination in the prophets.
2. Idealism in the prophets.
3. Nature in the prophets.
4. Spirituality in the prophets.

CHAPTER V

1. What is the meaning of the term "wisdom" as applied to certain books of the Bible?
2. Why are The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and The Epistle of James listed as wisdom literature?
3. What is the physical organization of The Proverbs?
4. How does the technique of Ecclesiastes help in its interpretation?
5. Is there parallelism of thought in Ecclesiastes?
6. What are the literary antecedents of The Epistle of James?

TOPIC

Special study of the poems in The Proverbs.

CHAPTER VI

1. What is an idyl?
2. Is The Book of Ruth an idyl?

TOPIC

Special study of the character of Ruth.

CHAPTER VII

1. What is the meaning of the term "drama"?
2. Is there any drama in the literature of the Bible?
3. Does The Book of Esther satisfy the Horatian requirement of four acts?
4. Does The Book of Esther contain logical divisions to satisfy dramatic technique?

TOPICS

1. Special study of the character of Vashti.
2. Special study of the character of Haman.
3. Special study of the character of Esther.
4. Dramatic limitations.
5. Reasons for considering Job dramatic.

Chapter VIII

1. Why are twenty-one of the twenty-seven books in letter form?
2. Why is the parabolic form so frequently used?
3. What is meant by apocalyptic literature?

TOPICS

1. Special study of the parable.
2. Special study of symbolism in The Revelation of John.

Chapter IX

1. Of what manuscript did Wycliffe make use?
2. Did Tyndale use Hebrew and Greek manuscripts?
3. How do you account for the persistence of Anglo-Saxon simplicity in English style?

TOPIC

The formative influence of the Hebrew and the Greek language upon the English translations.

Chapter X

TOPICS

1. Historical investigation of the Old Testament Apocryphal books.
2. Literary value of the books.

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